



The **H** *Magazine for the Christian Home*
Hearthstone

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The Magazine for the Christian Home

Hearthstone

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Fireside Chat . . .

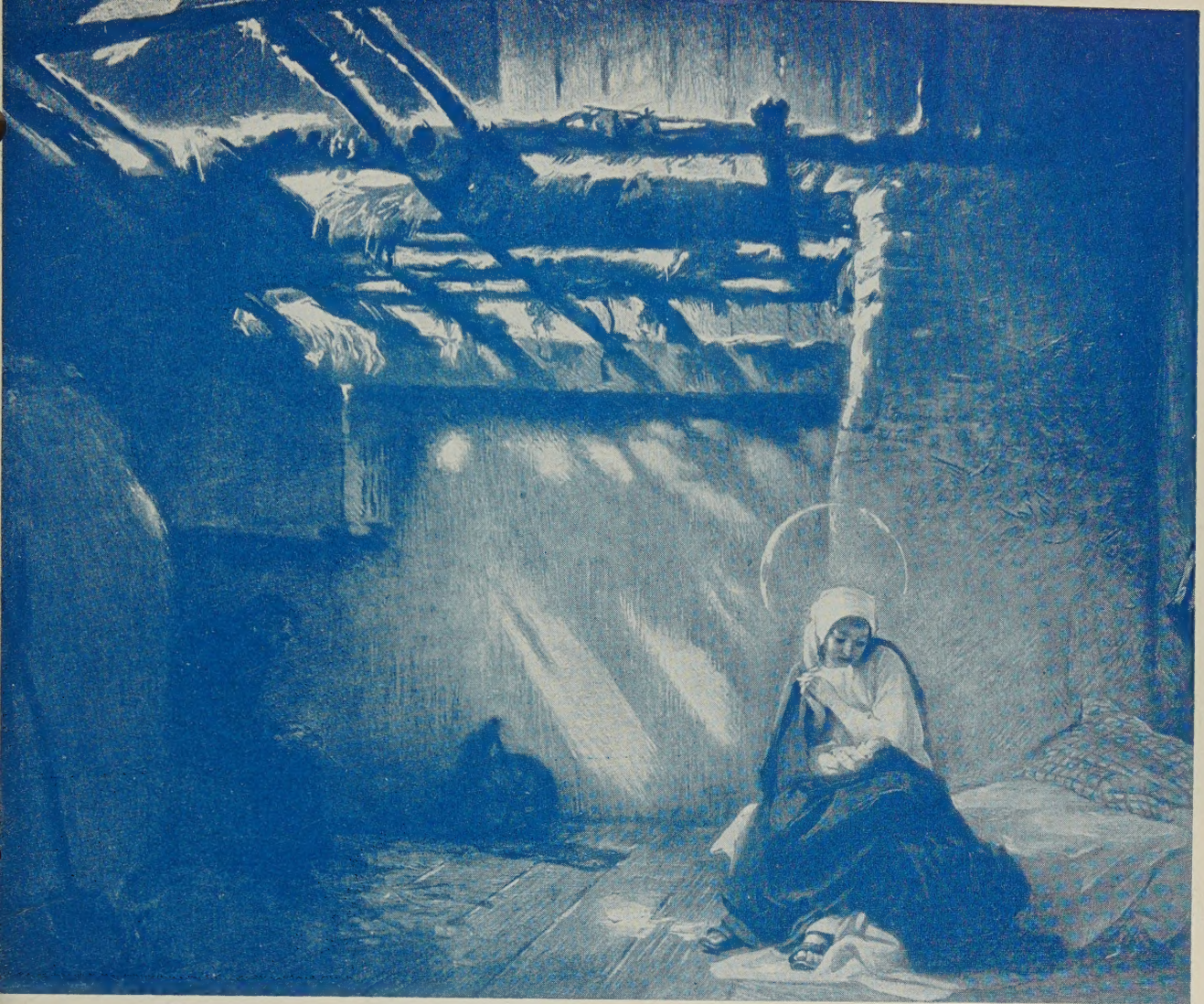
Merry Christmas, everyone. And that is just what we hope this issue of *Hearthstone* will help you to have. It is chucked full of ideas and suggestions for enriching your Christmas season.

Is what to give the children bothering you? Mrs. Carlson has some suggestions and good ideas for judging what children would like on page 22.

Turn all your plans toward Christmas with traditions suggested in "Start Your Christmas Tradition Now." There are other helps, too—among them a Christmas Creche, and Christmas poems and prayers in *Worship in the Family With Young Children*.

Our cover picture is a detail from the painting, "Holy Night," by Correggio. The painting was finished in 1530 for the altar-piece in a chapel at Reggio, Italy. One hundred years later it was stolen by a duke, and in 1746 it was sold to August III, Elector of Saxony. Until after the recent war it was in a gallery in Dresden. Now it is probably with other masterpieces taken from Dresden to Moscow.

The artist was born in a small town in the Duchy of Medena, Italy, in 1494 and died there forty years later. With the completion of a meager education, he had no contact with painting other than his own. As he never traveled to the greater centers of artistic activity, his creativity stemmed purely from the love of life and painting. Himself simple and unselfish, he portrayed beauty, reality, and charm in his figures. It took the world a hundred years to discover that he was a genius—one of the half-dozen greatest artists of the world.



The Nativity

—By Albrecht

“You Will Find a Babe . . .”

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart.

—Luke 2:8-19.

*A
Word
from*

*The
Word*

Start Your

Christmas Tradition Now!

(Even if you already follow Yuletide customs, don't miss these ideas! They are dandies!)

By Vera Channels

CHRISTMAS IS A WONDERFUL TIME—not only because the season itself is joyous but because of the lasting glow of love and friendliness and hope which it fosters. This is especially true when family life in the home is strengthened and unified by special intimate family traditions which are repeated year after year. Family customs can mean so much to children that they remember them with pleasure throughout their lives and often institute similar festivities in their own homes.

If you have no Christmas traditions in your home, now is the time to start them. If you already celebrate Christmas in your own special way, perhaps you will want to add some new ideas to make it even more festive. Anyone who has a flare for interior decoration will want to deck the halls with holly and even slip in a little mistletoe here and there. Christmas is a grand time for experimenting in new foods and getting out the time-tested recipes of your grandmother's day. If you're neither housekeeper nor cook, by preference, perhaps you'll want to add some fun for this important celebration. Take your pick, begin early, and have a lot of fun.

Dress Up the House for Christmas

Even though you haven't fully recovered from fall housecleaning, you'll notice that things are beginning to look a little dingy by December. Begin with a clean, bright house and your Christmas decorations will do the rest. First think of the entrance to your house. Is it inviting? Do friends drop in unexpectedly during the Christmas holidays? A gay wreath, a few boughs tied with a generous red oilcloth bow, a cluster of pretty bells, or just plain "Merry Christmas" printed on a white door with red scotch tape should do the trick. Large cardboard candles might stand at each side of the door or the doorway may be draped with a single garland or green boughs enhanced by colored lights. A stocking full of cookies tied to the door with a red bow would be a come-on for the small fry and some oldsters too.

We always tie a few attractive boughs with a very large red oilcloth bow to the front door. Each year after Christmas we carefully roll the oilcloth and save it for another year for this has become our own special front door welcome.

What you do to the inside of your house is limited only by the extent of your imagination, but in gen-

eral, it is preferable to choose a few distinctive decorations which fit in with the general life and habits of the family. Most families have a tree which indicates the personality of the household more than anything else. If there are small children it may be decorated with paper chains, popcorn strings, silver stars, candy canes, and gingerbread men. The children love to make their own ornaments and feel that it is really their own tree when they have a chance to help with it. Fancy little cookies in the shape of bells, stars, stockings, or even Santa himself are decorative and tasty. At the bottom, place the gifts that you have wrapped to give away and those that come to you ahead of time. They add a gay and festive touch.

The dime stores carry small, inexpensive figurines which may be used in an attractive arrangement for the manger scene. Place them on straw on a small



—H. Armstrong Roberts

Delivering packages he has helped to wrap is part of Bobby's Christmas celebration.

table or the mantel or build a small wooden shed to represent the stable. A large gilded wooden salad bowl placed on edge behind the creche makes an effective background when surrounded with greens. Some families place a small lighted candle in front of the scene each evening during the Christmas season. If you or your children have a knack with clay or wood and tools you might try fashioning some figures of your own.¹

Candles are a most important asset to any Christmas decorations. Christmas wouldn't seem quite right without our large, homemade candle for it carries with it many pleasant memories of Christmas through the years. Some families place a lighted candle in the window for the Christ Child, who is said to walk about on Christmas Eve looking for a welcome sign. The soft glow of candles on mantle or dinner table adds just the right atmosphere for a very Merry Christmas.

There are so many good pictures of the birth of Christ which all of us would enjoy if only we could have them out where we could see them. We arranged this in our family by covering a small tilt-top table with burlap and pinning our favorite reproductions on it. We also added those Christmas cards which were copies of famous paintings and those which had a special significance for us. A large folding screen or a bulletin board of red felt is handy for displaying Christmas cards. Each year we add a few more pictures to our collection and eagerly look forward to our "Christmas Art Exhibit."

Why not go "all out for Christmas" and get yourself a bright red table cloth for the occasion? This could be made of two lengths of red cotton dress material or even cheesecloth seamed down the middle and hemmed at the ends. Almost any gay and glittering centerpiece will complete the picture. Try gilding a large wooden salad bowl with a small bottle of gilt from the dime store. Fill it with luscious fruits and vegetables and surround it with candles. Or use gleaming white cornucopias on top of a few boughs of evergreen. Each year we use a small village scene with little houses surrounding a mirror or ice. Santa in his sleigh approaches from the other side of the "lake." A small Christmas tree decorated with goodies such as candy canes, sugar plums, or ornamental cookies would be tempting as well as pretty.

Place cards can be made by the smaller ones and let them be as original as they wish. Some families go so far as to provide small corsages, boutonnieres and hair ornaments made of green holly or evergreen, a few red berries, and a ribbon.

Go the Limit in the Kitchen

Christmas is a time when we want to mix a little of the past along with the present and future. Many a housewife digs into her grandmother's cook book to learn just how she made those special little cookies which always tasted so good. If your family has a

¹See Page 18 for another way to make a creche.



—Monkmeyer.

—Watson.

Every child should share the mystery and excitement of wrapping gifts. Larger families might stage an annual contest for the most original and attractive wrapping.

"nationality," you'll want to make the special goodies typical of that country. And if you don't have any—now's the time to adopt at least a few ideas from those who do.

Some families share their goodies with their friends, using them as gifts to the paper boy, milkman, delivery boy, neighbors, or serving them when guests drop in for the evening. When wrapped in a cellophane bag and tied with a bright ribbon, they make a very attractive gift.

My daughter and I have started a tradition which promises to be a good one. Last year we made gingerbread men for her little friends to tie on their trees. And this year we plan to make many more spicy gentlemen. It is fun for children to help make gingerbread men, to decorate them with icing and raisins, and to deliver them to their friends.

We always make several fruit cakes for our own use and a very special fruit cake for very special friends. This one is decorated with holly and red berries and makes a very welcome gift. Attractive cookies can be made by putting green, red, and white cookie batter into the cookie press at the same time. A little cake coloring added to the batter save icing and makes a very gay Christmas cookie.

Laugh and Be Gay—for This Is Christmas!

Almost everyone sings the Christmas carols sometime during the Christmas season because they have

(Continued on page 40.)

Your Child Learns About Jesus

By Hazel A. Lewis

WHAT SHOULD JESUS mean to a little child, to a growing boy or girl, to be specific, to your child?

Is Jesus so important in human history and are his life and teaching so involved in theology that to present anything about Jesus to children would be confusing and make later, fuller, understanding more difficult? There are sincere people who think so. There are others who feel that it is best to present Jesus to children in his full theological significance and hope for understanding later. Is either position the right one?

What did Jesus himself mean when he said, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God."¹ The occasion for these words of Jesus is most often used as a story for children. Its deeper meaning is one for parents and for the church. When we understand it, even in part, we will know better how to do as those parents of old who brought their children to him, and to receive them as Jesus did. Incidentally, the popular interpretation in art, story, and song that it was the mothers who brought their children to Jesus that day is not true to the account in the New Testament. In fact we may feel reasonably sure the fathers were there on such an important occasion. One account says "The disciples rebuked the people."² "People"

would certainly include fathers in the Jewish mind.

To return to the question of how and when Jesus is to be presented to children. Would it be reasonable to accept as the answer, that those aspects of the life and teaching of Jesus which a child can understand and appreciate at different stages of his development will be presented to him, so that he will grow in his knowledge of Jesus and his love for the one who was the friend of children and of their parents. Perhaps the last three words are the key to many problems which might arise. Children accept most readily and without question the persons whom their parents know and love.

Children are sometimes confused by certain expressions which seem simple and natural to parents and teachers. The little child who asked his mother at Christmas time, "Is the Baby Jesus the big



—Holsted.

The Children's Friend

man Jesus' little boy?" was not alone in this confusion. Other children have asked the same question and probably many more have wondered. But it could be avoided by so simple a method as saying "when Jesus was a baby," instead of "the Baby Jesus." No one would say "little girl mother" but rather "when mother was a little girl." So with little children we should avoid the expression "The Boy Jesus," and say "When Jesus was a boy."

Little children should have stories of Jesus, the man, before stories of his childhood for, after all, it is what he was as revealed in his manhood that gives any reason for telling the few simple stories of his childhood. Yet the fact that Jesus was once a child gives to children a sense that he was "in every respect . . . as we are."³ The New Testament writer made this statement in relation to tempta-

¹Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17.

²Matthew 19:13.

³Hebrews 4:15.

tion. To a child it means more to know that he was a baby in his mother's arms, that he played in his village home and in the carpenter shop, that he was a boy who liked to go on a journey.

Three-Year-Olds

DURING THIS MONTH of December the three-year-old will enjoy the story "When Jesus Was a Baby,"⁴ but it will have greater meaning because he has already heard the story "The Children Who Went to See Jesus"⁵ and has seen Mathilda Keller's lovely picture of Jesus with a group of children.

A little child is beginning his acquaintance with Jesus if he and his parents have prayed together the prayer "Dear God, I am glad Jesus was so friendly to the children,"⁶ and have sung the simple little song:

We are glad for Jesus,
We are glad for Jesus.
Thank you, God.⁵

The suggestions given in the leaflets *Home Guidance in Religion*, will help parents themselves to grow in appreciation of Jesus as they see him anew through a child's eyes.

Four and Five-Year-Olds

This same experience of hearing stories of Jesus' life on earth, of growing in love for him, of seeing pictures which portray the feeling as well as the scene of events in his life, will go on through the kindergarten years (four and five) of the little child. The love and appreciation which grows in a little child is the beginning of this more mature faith.

A story of Jesus, the friend, is told in the church kindergarten just before the series of Christmas stories begins. It may be "When Jesus Went About Doing Good,"⁶ or "A Loving Gift for Jesus."⁷ These will help the child to know that it is Jesus the Friend about whom the Christmas stories are told. They begin with the story "When Jesus Was Born" and Baroccio's lovely picture, "The

Nativity."⁸ The traditional hymn, "Away in a Manger" is on one leaflet and plans for "Christmas Worship in the Family" on another. The family that joins in singing a child's hymn and has a special worship experience with a little child, will be richer spiritually. Reading aloud Maud Lindsay's poem "Once in a Stable,"⁹ will be good for parents and children.

THIS IS THE TIME to introduce a lovely picture of Jesus into the child's room or some other place in the home where it can be placed low enough that he can see it well. One of the pictures of the head of Christ should have a place of honor in the home. A good copy of one of the many pictures of Jesus and the children should be placed in the child's home or corner, being careful that the picture itself is not given any "magic" qualities. The pictures by Vogel, by Flandrin, by Clementz, are all forthright in spirit without fantasy which is often confusing to little children. If there is a picture on one of the church school leaflets which a child likes especially it could be mounted or framed. Or a set of the large pictures containing it could be purchased and the favorite one framed.

Six-Year-Olds

When a child is six years old and goes to school he begins to be a member of a larger community. He sees connections between persons and to identify them with causes, institutions, places. It is essential that his religious ideas shall fit into this growing understanding of the world in which he lives. Even as a little child he has thought of God in connection with the world of nature and of people, the love and care of his parents. His desire to know

where God is, what he is like, grows as his mind reaches out for knowledge of other things. Then it is that Jesus takes on new meaning, also. When he hears the story, "Jesus Tells About God's Love and Care,"¹⁰ he begins to see that Jesus was not only the friendly person whom children loved, but he was God's son who came to tell people what God is like. This understanding is only beginning and will grow as long as life itself.

It is important that this simple truth shall be clear to a child. One of the regrettable errors which some children develop is the feeling that God is remote, powerful, but austere and given to punishment for wrongdoing, while Jesus is friendly and understanding. This accounts in part for the fact that children often pray to Jesus, and enjoy talking about him while they express fear of God. They are not able to understand the meaning of those words of Jesus to Philip "Who has seen me has seen the Father."¹¹

THROUGHOUT these first years in school and the Primary Department of the church school, the attractiveness of the personality of Jesus will become clearer to a child. The stories which he hears in church school and brings home will include many which show "Jesus' Concern for All,"¹² who needed help and tell of the ways he helped them. When these stories of Jesus come to children, they should have opportunity to do some similar kindly service within their power. When he hears how Jesus healed the lame man who was brought by his four friends, a child may be helped to discover what surgeons are doing today.

If there is a hospital for crippled children he may send a game or a picture book to a child there.

¹⁰Primary Graded Lessons, First Year, Fall Quarter.

¹¹John 14:9.

¹²Primary Graded Lessons, First Year, Fall Quarter.

Jesus should be known in keeping with your child's capacity and experience.
Here is an outline of the progress you may expect.

⁴Nursery class leaflet, "Home Guidance in Religion," No. 10.

⁵Same series No. 9.

⁶Kindergarten Graded Lessons, My Bible Leaflet, No. 9.

⁷Kindergarten Graded Lessons, My Bible Leaflet, No. 61.



—Judson Rex.

For the child to recall to the family what he knows about Jesus helps fix his knowledge. Parents will see doubts as well as progress at these times.

There may be someone in the community for whom a child may do a kindly service. He should be helped to feel that God is at work in the world through doctors and other helpers, even the child himself.

The "Message to Parents" each quarter and the child's church school leaflet have many suggestions of activities.

Each year when the Christmas season comes, the stories of the Child should be heard and enjoyed because of an increased appreciation of Jesus. They can understand that it was because people loved him so much that they kept these stories and wrote them down so that we might have them too. It is in conversation in the family that a child may have his ideas made clearer or corrected.

The Christmas ceremonies in the home should include the reading of the Christmas story from the Bible. Perhaps the child will bring home from church school a plan for a home Christmas service and will appreciate the family's co-operation. The seven-year-old who reported sadly, "I did it by myself. Everybody was too busy," described a situation that can occur too easily.

Primary Age

The Christmas stories should be followed by stories of Jesus as he grew. In the Primary Department there will be stories of "The Boyhood of Jesus,"¹³ "Helpers of Jesus."¹⁴ In connection with the former a child will probably bring home the patterns and materials from which to make a small model of the village of Nazareth and the kind of house Jesus lived in when he was a boy. A place to work on it and to put it when it is finished so that the family can enjoy it too, will mean much to a child. The making of the village is intended as a way of helping the child to identify himself with Jesus. When he learns the Bible verses which are part of these sessions in the church school they have added meaning because Jesus learned them, too, when he was a boy.

Junior Age

All during these early years, through the third grade, a child has heard many stories of Jesus, but aside from the brief series of lessons described above they have not been in chronological order nor

¹³Primary Graded Lessons, Second Year, in January.

¹⁴Primary Graded Lessons, Third Year, in January.

have they been in any sense a study of the life of Jesus. But during the years nine to eleven, known as the Junior Department of the church school that important experience will come to a child. If the school is large enough to use the graded lessons in order by grades, this will be his first connected study of any length. "The Life of Jesus"¹⁵ is of course only a beginning of a study which it is hoped will continue throughout the child's life. It will involve the use of the Bible, maps, pictures. If his parents join with him in this study it will have far greater value to him. Many parents themselves find new interest in the life of Jesus through joining in this study with their child. It would be a good time to read the four Gospels in the *Revised Standard Version of the New Testament*, which every Christian home should have.

The Christmas message for these older boys and girls should take on a deeper meaning as they study "Why the World Needs Christmas,"¹⁶ "Christmas Through the Ages,"¹⁷ and other social aspects of the coming of Jesus.

During the pre-school and primary years and perhaps through much of later childhood it is the Jesus who walked this earth of ours, lived among men, showed them the love of God and the way to love and serve him, who is understandable to them. If wisely guided, they will love him and want to be like him. But somewhere along the way, or at the end of these junior years they will realize that Jesus is indeed the living Christ. Most of them will be ready to confess him as did Peter of old, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," and accept him as their personal Savior. That is the greatest moment in the child's religious experience. All that he has learned, every experience, every idea, every story, even as a little child, has gone into the making of that moment of commitment to Jesus who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

¹⁵First Year Junior Graded Lessons, January-March.

¹⁶Junior Graded Lessons, Second Year, Fall Quarter.

¹⁷Junior Graded Lessons, Third Year, Fall Quarter.

Faith as Personal Loyalty

By Jack Finegan

Loyalty to work and family, nation and people is not denied by this greater loyalty to Christ. These things are only kept from becoming idols in and of themselves.

PERHAPS the most important thing of all about faith, according to the teachings of Christ, is that faith is personal loyalty.

It is widely observed in the world today that men are "cracking up" for want of any supreme and compelling loyalty. In the Old Testament there is a story about a great image, the feet of which were partly of clay. A great many of the idols to which modern man has given his devotion have proved to have feet of clay. When that is discovered and disillusionment sets in, there is nothing left to cling to.

Nihilism is a word which has been used to describe the widely prevalent mood in Europe at the present time. It suggests that there is nothing whatsoever of any value, nothing to hold on to, nothing worth working for. *Ohne mich* is a phrase now widely used in Germany. It means, literally, "without me," and may be translated into American slang as meaning, "count me out." This is said to be the reply which many people in that unfortunate country make to any proposal which is advanced.

Out of France has come the philosophy of existentialism in an atheistic and hopeless form. It represents, as one writer has put it, a "dreadful freedom." Where men are free from believing in anything or in anyone their freedom becomes an appalling nightmare.

OTHER OBJECTS of devotion are not utterly false like those which beguiled large sections of Europe and then left them in utter

disillusionment, but are only limited in their ability to provide man with goals of lasting significance. Many persons are utterly devoted to their families, and that is a beautiful and honorable thing. Only, sometimes when a member of the family is taken away in death, there is absolutely nothing left to hold on to. Thus even a family loyalty needs to be part of some larger loyalty in which it will find its true place and eternal meaning. Likewise, sometimes a person is completely dedicated to his work only to find that when his time of retirement comes upon him in a compulsory way, he has nothing else whatsoever to tie his life to. Some way we need a great loyalty which will catch up the

lesser ones and place them in the perspective of eternity.

From the days that Jesus Christ walked on earth until now his followers have found in a personal loyalty to him that which gives all of life its center and meaning. Work and family, nation and people are not denied by this greater loyalty, they are only kept from being idols in and of themselves.

The first person to make a concrete statement of faith in Jesus, involving the kind of personal loyalty of which we are speaking was, as far as we know, Peter. Jesus had just asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?" They had replied with the various reports which were circulating in Palestine concerning Jesus. The



—A. Devaney, Inc.

—David W. Corson

The National Capitol

reports were without exception complimentary. Jesus was thought of as a notable prophet. When the interrogation was put, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." In this short and simple statement, a world of meaning was wrapped up. Christ was the expected One, a deliverer whom God would send to bring his salvation and establish his kingdom. The most men had ever dared hitherto to believe was that this Christ would yet come in the future. Peter believed that Jesus was none other than the Christ already present with them. The faith which moved Peter as he spoke was a tremendous personal loyalty. He believed in the Man whom he followed. So distinctive was this aspect of the matter that the whole body of disciples eventually became known as Christians, followers of Christ.

IS HE WORTHY of that loyalty? Of this his closest followers have never had any doubt. It was only of themselves, whether they were worthy to follow after, that they often had to doubt. Here is how Jean Paul Richter speaks of Jesus: "The life of Christ concerns him, who, being the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, lifted with his pierced hands empires off their hinges and turned the stream of centuries out of its channel and still governs the ages."

Is personal loyalty to Christ something that is meaningful to men anywhere in the world? Yes! Albert Schweitzer has told how he preaches the gospel to the natives of Africa. Whatever he makes his starting point, he says, he always leads on "to the innermost fact involved in becoming a Christian, namely, being led captive by Christ." This he tries to make plain, he says, in every sermon so that even the man who is only present at a single Christian service can get an inkling of what it really is to be a Christian. We too have a basic understanding of what it is to be a Christian when we sense the compulsion of God's truth in the Christ whom he sent.



Rabbit Tracks

—Mona Cole

Viewpoint

**Dawn saw the last milky snowflake
Winging downward from a cloud-emptied sky.
Watched a few dull stars fading into depths
Of frosty, drifting, wraith-like mistiness.
Saw furred creatures warily emerging
From cunningly hidden burrow and den,
Trailing far out over dim open spaces,
Leaving deep patterned tracks in the new snow,
That enshrouded a sleepy world at rest.**

**But the bold, bright Sun riding high, saw:
A shining World in a petticoat of snow,
Billowing with wind-pleated ruffles,
Edged with fine lace of sparkling ice crystals;
A star-like design of blue shadowed paw tracks
Embroidered upon it with bright stitches,
And a tree-outlined mantle of rich green
Enfolding her broad, corpulent shoulders:
Nature parading her glittering best!**

—MONA WYSE COLE

The Christmas Story

Told in Art

IN CHRISTIAN ART, the Christmas story is one which has been told endlessly. It is the story of how God came to earth as a child: the annunciation to Mary, the visit of the shepherds and the wise men, and the flight into Egypt; and all are events forever endeared as subjects for portrayal in art.

Nearly every church and cathedral of medieval times had at least one stained glass window showing the nativity or manger scene. Often there was a "Mary Window" depicting the mother of Jesus as the queen of heaven. The people of that day had a great love for Mary, for they held the Roman Catholic belief that because of her tender understanding as the mother of Jesus, she could intercede for them.

The annunciation was another well-loved theme of medieval and Renaissance times. It was pictured again and again in stained glass, sculptured in stone, and hewn from wood.

Over the doorways and lining the portals of these cathedrals were magnificent stone statues which unnamed artists carved to show the story of the Bible and of the church, so that all the people, many of whom could not read, might become familiar with the traditions and history of Christianity.

German and French cathedrals were especially rich in portrayals of the Christmas story in the arts. The magnificent stone carvings of the twelfth century West Portal of Chartres gives in some nineteen carvings the details of different scenes in the events leading to Jesus' birth up through the flight into Egypt.



—National Gallery of Art, Kress Collection

Giorgione's "Adoration of the Shepherds," one of the many Italian masterpieces centered about the nativity.

IT IS IN ITALY, during the Renaissance, that we find in the art of painting the richest outpouring of the Christmas story. Scenes of the crucifixion were often portrayed, but the Madonna and Child were by far the most popular of religious subjects.

During the Italian Renaissance the nativity scene often pictured important local personages. Many of these paintings were quite elaborate, a far cry from the simple account of the arrival of the shepherds to see the Child in the man-

ger. It helps our appreciation to understand how artists came to make these paintings so elaborate.

Wealthy donors, such as the Medici, would commission a painting of the nativity. The artist, who in those days knew nothing of correct Palestinian costume, quite naturally clothed his figures in the attire of his times.

Sometimes the face of a wise man would be a member of the Medici family or a wealthy donor. If the donor was important and wished to lavish a great work of art upon the people, the painting

By Jean Louise Smith

was executed in a rich style with elaborate costumes, perhaps with real jewels set in.

The story behind the painting of these nativity scenes is often fascinating. For example, when Benozo Gozzoli painted the adoration of the three wise men on the walls of a room in the Riccardi Palace, in Florence, Italy, he really pictured how Cosimo di Medici entertained the Emperor, the Pope, and the Emperor of Constantinople, portrayed as the three wise men, at what was hoped would be a conclave to unite the church.

The fresco shows the procession coming down the hill from Fiesole into Florence. The scenes include the "Adoration of the Virgin" and the "Procession of the Wise Men" and contain portraits of political and church leaders of the artist's day. The fresco is an excellent example of how closely art is related to the life of the day.

WHILE PAINTING, sculpturing, stained glass, and wood carving have been the chief means that artists of all times have used to show the Christmas story, the art of illuminating manuscripts, even though classified as a minor art, deserves attention. We owe a great debt to the monks in medieval monasteries who patiently designed and painted this beautiful work. The devotion of a lifetime to the decoration of one manuscript was considered happy service to God.

Anyone who was privileged to see the exhibit of illuminated manuscripts held early this year at the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore realizes the value of this art to the church. The exhibit was the largest of its kind ever assembled and the effect of these intricately done, sparkling, and richly colored pages was overwhelming. Over and over, they tell the details of some phase of the Christmas story. Flemish, French, German, and English medieval monasteries have given us this vast treasure of Christian art.

Modern times have been too full and crowded to produce art like that of the cathedral age and the era of manuscript illumination.

Time was lavished on the arts of that day and later, during the Renaissance, when the painting of religious subjects was profuse. Wood carving, too, requires time and patience and cannot be done by machine.

Detailed study of a great Christmas painting, such as Giorgione's "Adoration of the Shepherds," gives us new interest and appreciation of the heritage of Italian Renaissance art to the Christian church. This magnificent painting is now in America at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C.



—National Gallery of Art, Kress Collection

"Madonna and Child" by Antonio Rossellino who lived from 1427 to 1478. The sculpture is done in low relief in marble and is thirty-three by twenty-two inches.

The clear colors of this painting make it difficult to believe that the artist lived in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Many of the nativity scenes of Giorgione's day and of the century to follow were elaborate in their pageantry, but here is a simple, devout, and direct portrayal of the scene.

The setting is the opening of a rock cave in the Italian countryside. Mary, pictured as a young Italian woman, has brought out her child and laid him on a pillow covered with a linen cloth, so that the shepherds may pay homage. Joseph, an old man, kneels devoutly while the two shepherds, who have just arrived, look in won-

der, one kneeling, and the other about to kneel.

There are no halos; no gold has been laid over the paint. It is a simple picture of the nativity, yet a devout and truly spiritual quality is present. All four persons in the painting center their entire attention and devotion on the child Jesus.

The colors are largely shades of brown with lovely blue and touches of green, rose, and copper to give contrast. Quiet, peace, and utter devotion are the keynotes of this painting.

Little is known about Giorgione except that he was born in 1477 in Northern Italy and lived just 33 years. Although Venice was the scene of many of Italy's most elaborate pageants, Giorgione chose not to mention them in his art.

AN EXAMPLE of a Christmas-inspired theme in sculpturing is found in Antonio Rossellino's "Madonna and Child." This is also in the National Gallery. It was executed about 1475 during the period when the art of sculpturing flourished in Florence, Italy.

The work is done in marble in fairly low relief, without cutting the figures away from the background to a large degree. Simplicity and sincerity characterize this lovely work showing the young mother of Jesus gently supporting her child who is quite old enough to stand alone.

In fact, the sculptor has captured a mood which is as though Mary had just appeared at a window with her child. Both faces express character and personality. The simple halos mark the devotion of a religious work.

We know very little about the artist, Antonio Rossellino. Art critics cite him for the quality of charm which he imparted to his sculpturing. Fine composition, expression of the character of his subjects, together with vitality, give his work a unique quality.

IT IS ENCOURAGING to find something of the same spirit that prompted the building of the great European cathedrals, in the mod-

ern Washington Cathedral, Washington, D. C. This cathedral is being built one section at a time, as people all over our nation make it possible by their contributions. The choir, the crossing, and one transept have either been finished, or are under way.

The portrayal of the Christmas story has an important part in the art of the Washington Cathedral. In fact, the first portion to be erected was the Bethlehem Chapel. It was opened in 1912 and for twenty years all cathedral services were held there. In that chapel the comprehensive story of the birth of Jesus is pictured in carvings and stained glass. The center panel of the reredos behind the altar is a beautiful carving of the nativity.

A series of five stained glass win-

dows in the Bethlehem Chapel represent the chief scenes in the events of the nativity.

Two excellent wood carvings on the armrests of choir stalls in the choir of the cathedral show the journey of the wise men and an angel appearing to the shepherds. In these small carvings the grain of the wood shows beautifully and the anonymous artist has utilized his limited space to amazing advantage. It is a marvel to realize that three wise men and their camels were included in such a small space. The massed effect is excellent.

A feeling of wonder and amazement prevails the wood carving showing the shepherd scene. One youth covers his eyes, the sight is so dazzling, and another cannot resist looking, while two more gaze

in complete absorption. Only the sheep are unconcerned.

The angel proclaims the tidings with dignified serenity. The carving fairly sings, "Gloria in Excelsis, Deo."

THIS BRIEF SURVEY of the Christmas-inspired art of several countries from medieval to modern times is only an introduction into the vast treasure house of the Christmas story told in the arts. As you and your family look around in your own church, in the churches of your town, and visit your art galleries, or look at pictures in books and magazines, you will be amazed by all the different ways artists of many centuries working in many lands, and with varied materials, have portrayed the old and dearly loved Christmas story.

Meet the Real Santa Claus

By Ollie J. Robertson

Santa Claus is not entirely a make-believe affair. There was a real Santa Claus as true records show. His name was Saint Nicholas. He was Bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor during the reign of Diocletian, many years ago. St. Nicholas suffered many hardships, being sentenced to prison because of his religious belief.

St. Nicholas, who was a wealthy man, gave money to those in need. Usually he gave in secret. He was especially fond of children and did many little favors for them. Usually, when someone received a gift from an unknown friend, they credited the gift to St. Nicholas. The good Saint's festival was celebrated on Dec. 6 and parents who gave presents to their children at this time said they were from Nicholas.

Dutch settlers were supposed to have introduced St. Nicholas to America, where he was greatly changed, his name becoming Santa Claus, and his religious robe being laid aside for the red suit with white trimmings. He was also given the reindeer and the sleigh, and gave up his own day for Dec. 24.

Around the Corner

Is the Year 1950 and the first number of the second volume of *Hearthstone*. Sharpen your appetite on these prospects, articles that will appear in that issue: "Twelfth Night at Home" by Lois Rea, how to end the Christmas season. "Sorry, I Have a Date" by Susan Chiles, a new kind of "date" for a teen-ager. "Magic in Sea Lane" by Lydia Roberts, what one woman did to transform a community. "Marks of a Chris-

tian Home" by Jackson Wilcox, some of the characteristics which identify a home as growing more Christian. "Brothers and Sisters in the Home" by Vera Channels, how to help them appreciate one another more. "Never Too Old for a Hobby" by Clarence E. Flynn, a horse that any one can ride. Space forbids telling you all the good things in store for you. Be sure you get them!



Sink Sonnettes

By Frances Brown

Ah, the Web

Her appointments were the finest,
Her gown, it made her proud,
The menu, tasty, sumptuous
As her budget had allowed;
The guests were dining, happy,
But she wasn't gay at all,
She had glanced up and discovered
A COBWEB ON THE WALL.

WHAT'S THE MATTER with our teen-agers?" Are they just drifting, and if so, in what direction? These two questions are being frequently asked and there are occasional rumors that the teenager is drifting in the wrong direction. To substantiate the rumors examples are cited of the irresponsibility of youth and their erroneous ideas of what it takes to have a good time. The latter can be illustrated by the incident of an eighth-grade boy who, desiring to celebrate after a music festival, displayed a pint of wine and two cigars declaring that he was going to have a "good time."

It is not that youth particularly desires to be exasperatingly difficult and irresponsible by his failure to fulfill certain obligations, nor does he delight in an unwise search for thrills and enjoyment. Adults frequently resort to escape mechanisms, too, as they try to avoid routine duties and obligations.

Rather than continue to discuss the behavior of the teen-ager, why not analyze why they do as they do, and what parents and church school teachers can do to help them?

IN THE FIRST PLACE, youth needs to be understood. This may seem an impossible task, because frequently youth does not even understand himself. He looks within and is both frightened and fascinated by the person to whom he is at times a stranger and yet from whom he cannot run away. He looks without and is frightened and disillusioned by those who would help him.

During this period of adjustment, youth will work out some understanding of himself and the world around him. At this point parents and teacher have the unique opportunity of helping to shape personality and assist youth that he may enjoy the beauty around him as well as to create beauty for others.

When church school teacher and parents, as a result of their own Christian convictions, aid youth to a growing understanding of God, an awakening to the needs of others, and a happy experience of fel-

lowship with his group, then satisfactory results have been accomplished.

What are some of the methods to use to achieve this goal? The following project was a successful experiment of one youth counselor for bringing about a closer relationship between herself and the parents of the group with which she was working. The youth group had planned an indoor carnival to raise money for conference and camp. For several weeks the committees had met to select the type of activities that would be included in their evening of fun. The various members had been assigned their duties. Some were to make and distribute posters and take care of publicity, others were to contact parents for assistance at the lunch counter while the remainder of the group gathered material for the bazaar and white elephant sale. It appeared that every detail had been considered and responsibility assigned, but the counselor discovered that the poster committee, having made some very attractive posters, had distributed only a few. The other committees had met but in the same manner only part of their duties had been completed.

The counselor realized that the group had been eager and willing, interested and enthusiastic about the project, but they did not realize their own responsibilities in completing each assigned task. The counselor realized that while youth is willing to serve, and youth counselors may be giving many hours of their time to the youth program, it requires the co-operation of the parents to make it a success. Needless to add that when the parents were advised of the project, every detail was completed

and the entire affair was a huge success.

When parents are acquainted with the youth program and its purposes, almost without exception there is complete co-operation because parents are interested in what their young folk are doing. In this particular event, parents shared in the evening of fun as well as donating to baked goods counters and needle-craft booth. The young folk were all busy with their tasks but had the co-operation of the youth counselor and their parents as well.

WORKING TOGETHER is only one of the methods which can be used in establishing a closer relationship between parents and teacher. **REGULAR** attendance at both church and church school on the part of both teacher and parents will have a great influence on the life of the teen-ager. If dad is a "swell guy" and stays home from church, well, youth decide it's all right to stay home, too, and if teacher is irregular in attendance at church school without good excuse, it also has a reaction upon the mind of youth as to the importance of religious education. Youth make their analyses upon the basis of value received and when parents and teachers do not prove to them the value of worship and study and Christian fellowship, they doubt its worthwhileness.

There is a distinct advantage in arranging a series of parent-teacher conferences in the youth department of a church school. Such conferences give the teacher an opportunity of explaining to parents what is being done during the lesson period. Many parents need encouragement and guidance as to how to establish some definite

By Katherine M. Burghard

Parents and Church

procedures in the home for spiritual development, fellowship and intellectual growth. Frequently they are afraid to approach the subject of religion. There is so little time because of the demands made by business and social activities. In an informal conference parents may express a desire for resource material which will be helpful in guiding youth, or questions may be raised and freely discussed by parents and teacher. Through such discussions parents are often enabled to see new light on a particular problem and will try out new methods and experiments which establish better home relations. The teacher may make the initial contact by a visit in the home and if problems are presented at that time may suggest the value of parent-teacher conferences.

When adult classes are searching for desirable material to use for their monthly social evening, books that will be helpful in guiding the Christian education of youth may be reviewed and discussed.

The parent-teacher association has proved its value in most grade schools but they have seldom flourished in grammar or high school. Parents of this age group will find the smaller group meetings more satisfactory when the informal discussion can take place and where there can be a more intimate contact with parents. The minister and church school superintendent also may be a part of this group. A speaker may be invited occasionally to address the group upon some subject which has been presented as a common problem and one in which both parents and teacher have a common interest.

WHEN ACQUAINTANCE and friendship of parents and teacher have developed into a partnership, real contributions can be made to-



—Harold M. Lambert

Young people plan with enthusiasm and thoroughness, but "follow through" is often lacking. Teachers need parental enthusiasm to back up their work with young people.

ward the spiritual growth and social guidance of youth. When parents see the teacher or counselor as one who is trying to aid youth in following the Christian way of life, and the teacher views the parents as persons, who in spite of mistakes and blunders are trying to help youth learn to face every problem with Christian spirit and unselfish love, then strong foundations have been laid for the successful parent-teacher relationship.

As a result of such a partnership activities will be arranged for and with youth that will make full use of his energies. The teen-ager wants to achieve significant things and is more eager to accept challenges and serve to some particular purpose.

When youth is challenged by parents and teacher to a search for truth and when this search is based on basic laws of the universe with

which youth can make experiments, then there need be no concern about the external functions which will draw these two leaders of youth into closer relationship.

Dr. George Washington Carver, when asked which great truth he first acted upon, replied; "I took this verse in the Bible, 'In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths.' " (Prov. 3:6.) When he found that it really worked he had a conviction that urged him on to further exploring in his search for truth and resulted in many contributions to science.

Just cementing more firmly the relationship between parents and church school teacher by social and intellectual get-togethers is not sufficient to eliminate all the problems of youth. These conferences can aid in the guidance of youth, but youth will never be convinced by words alone. It is the truth that parents and teacher are living that will count for the most. When youth can see that parents and teacher have a sense of the presence of God in all the small as well as the great concerns of daily life, then youth, too, will have a growing consciousness of that presence.

hool Teachers

What Can You Expect?

By F. B. McAllister

You and your family have a right to expect many things
of the church. What are they?

*"There is a river, the streams whereof
shall make glad the city of God."*

THERE IS NOT A NIGHT that John and I do not thank God for the river," she said.

Well they might! That magnificent river provided the people beside its banks against almost every conceivable need. This was how the wife of the old river guide explained it.

"The river gives us so much. In the winter, wild game for the table, furs, ice. In the summer, fish, and you tourists. In all seasons, transportation. It's a grand old stream. We depend upon it!"

That was thirty years ago. Last year I again visited the community and the home beside the shores of that river. The son of the river guide met me. "No," he was telling me, "Mom and Dad have gone long ago. And the stream isn't the same. Pollutions, you know! Timber cut away at its source. Floods, drought. Slides from the hills have robbed it of much of its beauty. You see, where Mom and Dad found it satisfying every basic need, we have to get our living and happiness from other sources."

His tone of regret reminded one of the lament of Joel, as he complained about the wasted fields and the land that mourned; about the seed that had rotted beneath the clod and beasts that groaned: "for even the rivers are dried up."

Rivers in drought, streams with pollutions—what a tragedy!

Well might the Psalmist joyfully cry, when the earth had been torn, and the mountains tumbled into the sea; when the floods roared and the hills shook: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God," for this river with its streams of blessing flowed forth from the temple of God. No wonder Martin Luther could find inspiration in this psalm of assurance for his majestic hymn. Here is a sublime song of faith and it is compared to a river flowing from the house of God to give help in times of spiritual drought or disaster.

Too often today that expected blessing has been polluted and denied, or turned into roaring destructiveness.

By every right, then, we should examine those expected streams which should flow from the church and very, very candidly, consider the influences and the forces which deny our homes of these practical and needed assistances in our day. We shall study several of these interrupted streams.

The Stream of Harmony

THE HOME EXPECTS from the Temple of God a steady flow of harmony, and rightly so. From the church should come integrating rather than dividing influences.

In an hour when a multiplicity of forces cleave us on every hand, if the integrating and cementing factors which should come to us from the church are turned into a disrupting force, then the church is also adding to the chaotic influences of modern life which tend to rend the home. That the people of God too frequently, by their own willfulness and ill-tempered loyalties, bring about some of the most tragic separations in the homes of the land, is one of the crying sins of the church.

"My child and I," wrote this mother, "were the soul of harmony. You know of our companionship through the years. We did things together; our tastes were alike, and we lived in as beautiful a relationship as mother and daughter might throughout the years until there came disharmony in our church. Then, the congregation divided. That division tore apart the perfect unity in our home. Why must the church do that!"

If the home needs its harmony, so does the heart.

One of the composers for the Cincinnati Symphony was asked what would happen if the wrong notes were placed in the score for the various instruments. He smiled, "Just a hodge-podge of dissonance. All twisted up! A mess."

A hodge-podge of dissonance. Recall that expression in the final Psalm, "And all that is within me, praise His Holy Name!" It would take harmony of the soul to do that.

In the family, does the church tend to bring the members together, to do things together, to have common interests, and to have united sentiments? In many of our churches today this idea has not been seriously enough considered.

Some churches, however, have taken this matter to heart. Their programming now has serious consideration for the possibility of arranging the schedule of events in such a manner that the family is not scattered all week and Sunday included.

ONE CHURCH partially solved the problem by centering many of the activities of most of the age levels—including a nursery—in one night. Beginning with a family dinner, followed by some diver-

sion which should include all ages, the various departments and organizations met separately for the transaction of business, and finally, the group as a body met for a concluding inspirational service. It was as though the family had come together at the end of the day for their devotions.

Let us face it. How long has it been since some coordinating body within the church sat down to examine its program in relationship to the home? Why could we not begin to do more things together, for the sake of the family?

The home has every reason, then, to plead that disrupting forces which make for family division, and the multiplicity of ill-considered activities which scatter the family, be prayerfully considered as forces blocking the stream of needed harmony which flows from the temple of God.

The Stream of Fellowship

NEXT TO ITS GIFT of the privilege of worship, the blessing of fellowship is what the home has a right to expect from its church.

The more so today, when paganism is rife in every circle of human relationships. But the water of this stream, strangely enough, too often has been poisoned. Yes, "pollution" is the term that may be rightfully used. The Kingdom of God on earth is, or should be, a stream so clear and sweet, that the world will want to live in its presence. How often that world has remarked, with some degree of truth, "What do they have over my crowd!"

What has happened to this clear stream of perfect fellowship? Too frequently the water has become poisoned with gossip, tale-bearing, pettiness, unkind remarks, and injustices. One father recently exclaimed when a team of personal workers invited him to bring his family into the church fellowship, "No, I can't afford to subject my family to the pettiness—and sometimes maliciousness—of small-church talk."

The church of the living God will defeat its purposes, if Christian fellowship, in the highest sense, is not reinaugurated. Let the stream of church fellowship be once more cleansed of its pollutions! How may this be done?

"They recognized that they had been with Jesus." There is the secret. Let there overflow in and throughout the membership such a quality of faith, respect, reverence, that the consuming yearnings of the people will be fulfilled. The world outside is crowded with hurtful and crushing forces. The church may deliberately set about it to create a colony of heaven on earth. Influence for helpfulness and considerateness is irrepressible. Let it splash over. "See, how they love one another!"

The home should ask of its church that the fellowship be all that is expected of it, for the home has a job to do and needs the help of the church. Environment is one of the great needs for the members of the household, and that the church should provide in a relationship so clean and wholesome and kindly that people cannot stay away.

The Stream of Democracy

OUR HOMES TODAY need more examples of democracy at its best. They want the church to show them how.

Yet this stream, which extols the chief as the servant of us all, has all but dried up in some of the churches. Some have even exclaimed with apprehension, "Maybe the democratic form of religion is not exactly the best to propagate the faith of our Lord."

Huge mountain slides have so obstructed the course of this stream, which should give to mankind the true meaning of democracy, that the stream-bed is all but dry. Some of us pride ourselves in having no authoritative head to the church, save Christ. Well we may. That is a testimony the world needs right now. But in our very churches where democracy should be exemplified, there may be a boss so dominant and adamant that everything in the church must move to his beck and call. And such dictators may become so entrenched by ingratiating themselves to a select few, that the main body of the church is willing to put up with them.

Now, parents need examples for the children on how a home and a community may work without inequality and dictatorship and snobbery. If this desired administrative, social, and spiritual equality is not to be found in the neighborhood church, where then can it be discovered? The home may say to the church, we need help right here!



—H. Armstrong Roberts

A Christian family looks to the church family for an example of spiritual, social, and cultural living. They know, too, that they are greatly responsible for maintaining a high level of church life.

The Stream of Character

THE HOME MUST send roots down deep into something when storms are pressing. Within the four walls of the dwelling there may be loneliness, defeat, weariness, frustration, even faithlessness. And the church may make this job of success in living either easier or harder.

In the house of God, and flowing from its source, should be healing and redemption. The genius of the temple of God is the transformation of character and life. That miracle the church has a right to anticipate as a gift to each home.

The home is potentially the best teacher of religion, the best molder of Christian character. Yet too often it does not know how to go about doing that job effectively. It looks to the church for guidance in achieving its purpose. The answer has too often been only—"Send your children to the church. We will look after his spiritual welfare." Now the church sees that it must have the help of the home. There are the springs of character and Christian life most easily made or marred.

You as parents can ask the church to show you how to help it in its program of Christian education. It is in the area of Christian living from day to day

that the home can also be said to be "the house of the Lord."

The mark of the successful Christian—indeed, his testimony—is the character he bears. From the day of his birth, the child should be surrounded by every influence that will help to develop Christian faith and character. Christian men and Christian women and Christian youth are the fruit of a home which is church nurtured. Such fruitage is what the home prays to have.

"That flows from the Throne of God!"

What, then, should be the contributing streams of blessing to the home from the church?

Harmony, Fellowship, Democracy and Character. These and more, but certainly these. Times like our own demand it. If the home today is to measure up, under the stress and strain of life, the church will make its greatest contribution in these needed areas.

My mother, when we settled in a new community, deliberately set about to find and to establish a church home. When someone asked her why, she simply answered, "I have a family of five."

Hear the Psalmist once more, "Though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea . . ." But then, hear him shout it, "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

Biblegram

By Hilda E. Allen

Guess the words defined below and write them over their numbered dashes. Then transfer each letter to the correspondingly numbered square in the pattern. The black squares indicate word endings.

Reading from left to right, the filled pattern will contain a selected quotation from the Bible.

A. A Christmas carol ----	_____
B. Covered with trees and brush -----	58 118 81 52
	101 86 62 92 76
C. Father of Jesus -----	_____
D. Building in which Jesus was born -----	28 98 65 49 51 102
	112 79 89 2 40 116
E. Christmas day, 1949 --	_____
F. Place of learning and education -----	36 9 69 88 95 85
	107 34 71 21 55 39
G. Neatest -----	_____
H. Very cold -----	113 33 74 111 25 94 14
	54 100 72 6 64 120
I. A piece of money ----	_____
J. A toy having a whirling or spinning motion	108 67 97 18
K. V-shaped cut, or nick, as in a stick -----	31 32 4 24 46 1 23 17 10
	5 50 27 104 115
L. Red berries, used as Christmas decoration -	_____
M. One of St. Nicholas's Reindeers -----	109 60 47 117 61
	82 99 48 106 13
N. A float, used to mark a channel -----	_____
	66 57 44 30

1		2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9		10
11	12	13		14	15	16	17	18	19	20		21
22		23	24	25	26	27		28	29	30		31
32	33	34	35		36	37	38	39	40		41	42
	43	44		45	46	47		48	49	50	51	52
53		54	55	56		57	58	59	60		61	62
63		64	65		66	67	68	69		70	71	72
73		74	75	76		77	78		79	80	81	
82	83	84	85		86	87		88	89	90	91	92
	93		94	95	96	97	98	99	100		101	102
103	104	105		106	107		108	109	110	111	112	113
	114	115	116		117	118	119	120				

O. Saving; careful; as saving money -----	114 80 3 91 87 59 7
P. Another of St. Nicholas's reindeers ----	16 75 20 105 42 56
Q. The growth on the head	35 93 103 110
R. Anyone preferred above all others -----	_____
S. One who saves; The Redeemer -----	22 38 96 11 68 15 70 53
	73 26 90 77 8 63 119
T. Covered stall at a fair	_____
U. A man of extraordinary size -----	41 12 29 43 37
	19 83 45 78 84

(Solution on page 33.)



Assistant to *Santa Claus*

By
Josephine M. Cook

HER LETTERHEADS READ, Mrs. Roy E. Jones, Miami, Florida, Creator of Dolls, but she is equally well known as one of Santa Claus's most energetic assistants. And like good old Saint Nick as soon as one Christmas is over, Mrs. Jones begins fashioning dolls and toys for the next Christmas.

For several years she has been making glad the hearts of fifty underprivileged children, who live in Renfro Valley, Kentucky. This soul-satisfying hobby had its beginning in 1945, when Mrs. Jones heard of a Christmas tree party that was being given for these boys and girls. Having been born in Rock Castle County, near Renfro Valley, she became particularly interested in this group and decided to make them the object of her love and affection.

At Christmas, this "fairy godmother" sends each girl a doll, a dress and a hair ribbon. Can you imagine the joy of these little girls, from this backwoods country, when they untie the tinsel ribbons, open up the brightly wrapped packages and behold their "Raggedy Ann" dolls?

SOME OF THE PARCELS contain Indian dolls, dressed in the colorful costumes of the Seminoles, who inhabit the Florida Ever-

glades. These too, are received with much curiosity and a great deal of enthusiasm.

But when the girls discover their own dresses, there is loud "Oh-ing" and "Ah-ing." Just think of it, new dresses—not hand-me-downs from an older sister! What they do not know is, that these lovely dresses are made out of cast-off clothing, that was sent to Mrs. Jones from persons who had heard of her hobby. It is laundered, or dry cleaned, turned wrong side out and cut to fit the desired size. Then under the skill of this talented lady's magic needle, the clothing becomes a girl's most cherished possession—a new dress!

This ingenious designer finds it thrilling to create a garment from a discard, trim it with buttons and bows, and laces and yarns, gathered from the four corners of these great United States.

EACH BOY FINDS in his box a shirt, a top and a harmonica. The shirts are cut from mill ends sent to Mrs. Jones from a friend in North Carolina.

In carrying out her hobby of doing for others, she has the splendid cooperation and help of her husband, Roy. Some years ago they talked about idle old people often being a liability to their children

and society. So they decided then, even though only in their middle fifties, that they would adopt interests and hobbies for themselves that would keep boredom and loneliness from their latter years, and at the same time would benefit others as well.

Besides the above-mentioned gifts, this generous couple gathered up fifty pairs of shoes and sent them to these children, who otherwise could not have walked over the frozen and muddy roads to school.

IN ADDITION, the Joneses do other welfare work, often clothing a child, ministering to shut-ins and aiding the needy. In between all this activity, Mrs. Jones makes Easter bunnies and Santa Claus dolls to sell. The money, from the sale of these articles, helps her finance her Renfro Valley project.

She says, "Into each article thoughts of both the donor and the recipient are woven, and finished with a prayer that God's blessing will rest upon each of the individuals represented. And if at the end of life's journey I can think some disillusioned child has been influenced to believe in the goodness of life, living will not have been in vain."

By Verna Grisier
McCully

A Christmas Creche

CRECHE IS A FRENCH word. It means cradle. You say it as though it were spelled "cresh." It also means a scene of Jesus as a baby with Mary and Joseph.

You can color this crèche. The faces and hands and feet should be flesh color. Make pink cheeks. The crib of the Christ Child should be tan or brown. Make the straw yellow. The coverlet can be pink or blue. Make the halo yellow.

Mary should wear a blue cape. Her gown can be pink. Leave her scarf white. Joseph wears a brown cloak over a green robe. His head-dress is white, too. The dove can be gray. Make the star yellow and orange. The little bird can be any color you like.

You will probably wish to make more than one crèche. Trace all of the figures carefully on white

paper. Color the tracings and cut them out. To make the figures stand, bend the standards back along the dotted lines. Bend back the bottom and sides of the crib.

Put the figures in a box turned over on one side. See figure A. Cover the box with fancy paper, or with evergreen twigs. This makes a very nice Christmas decoration. It is a nice gift, too.



The Star on the Tree

Laurie was determined to cut out part of
her heart for her family . . . she did,
too—for a while.



By
**Virginia-Murrill
Jeffries**

LAURIE SAT BY THE window and watched the snowflakes fall outside. They were fast covering the shrubbery around the house and making a white carpet on the sidewalk, like the canvas down the aisle of a church for a bride to

tread upon. Trees across the street were assuming a fragile, lacy look which was refreshing after the gaunt bare branches she had seen all fall. Her typewriter sat on a desk before her with a sheet of paper, half filled with

little black words, hastily typed. Was that all they were, Laurie asked herself? Were they just a new grouping of little black letters or did they amount to anything?

She thought of all the words she had written since she was fourteen and she wondered if they had been worth anything. Or had the nervous, pent up feeling she always had before she wrote and the exhilarating feeling of walking on the clouds which she had afterward been worth the sacrifices she had had to make? She thought of all the women she knew who went on about their housework and found their feeling of completeness in keeping things tidy and comfortable for their husbands. Suddenly Laurie stood up with a quick, impulsive movement of her body and ran her hand across her eyes.

"Why did I have to have this thing, whatever it is?" she asked herself out loud. "Why couldn't I be content to sweep and dust and cook and be complete the way a wife and a mother should be? Darning the clothes, crocheting lace tablecloths, doing the things I never have time for?"

She looked at her typewriter then as an enemy and she hated it. If she had been a different type of person she would have picked it up and slammed it against the floor, smashing the keys out of place. But because she was Laurie she adjusted the carriage and put the cover on it and set it on the floor against the wall. Then she folded the sheets of paper, put them in a drawer, turned and walked out of the room and down the stairs, put on her coat, scarf, and galoshes, and went out into the snow.

A dull gray tone to the sky gave a strange feeling to the air and the flakes falling on her face, making her blink her lashes, were like bits of cold wet cotton dropped there by some unseen hand. She felt the cold air go into the pores of her skin, for there was no wind, and her face came alive again. Her hands dug deeper into her pockets and she watched her feet make new tracks on the clean white sidewalk. It was as though no one had ever gone this way before, as though her feet were the first to break the

clean white monotony of the snow on the walk.

"It's not that Ken doesn't like for me to write," she said to the sparrows on the branches who flew about trying to find a warm branch for their tiny feet, who shook their feathers to get rid of the cold white flakes. "It's not that at all. In fact, I think he's proud of me when I get a check or an encouraging letter from an editor." The birds seemed to understand and flew on away. Laurie walked on.

No, it wasn't Ken's fault that she felt as she did. But when some morning she awakened with the feeling of music swirling around her head and a nervous tension which made her resent every moment which kept her from her typewriter, made her cross with Kenny, sending him off to school without the smile an eight-year-old boy needs for the problems of his day, making the breakfast dishes a deadly chore, Ken would grow glum, never once suspecting what was the matter. He would go off, too, to work without the encouraging smile and cheery good-by any good husband deserved from his wife. And then last night—but she couldn't stand to think about last night now.

She would think about Christmas instead and it was certainly time she started thinking about it. She glanced at the snow-filled fences and watched some cars with their lights on going slowly down the street. This was certainly Christmas weather. Maybe there would be a white Christmas after all.

This afternoon after school she would go coasting with Kenny if the ground was in condition. That might make up a little for this morning. Kenny was a sweet little kid, a whole lot like her in many ways. He had his own moods but on the whole he was happy and enthusiastic and he was crazy about school. Maybe he would be a professional man some day, a doctor or a minister or maybe a lawyer like his father. He might even be a writer, she thought, and paused in her tracks. Oh, I hope not, she thought quickly. But then it might not be so bad for a man.

He could make a profession of it, instead of having constantly to neglect other things for it. Maybe he would have a wife who would be content to cater to his moods, to keep his house going smoothly and to be cheerful and encouraging when he got a story back or when a plot wasn't working out.

SHE COULDN'T HELP thinking about last night. It kept coming to her mind. It might be better just to face it, and try to think it through. She could see Ken, now, coming home with the rain, which had preceded the snow, all over his clothes, dripping off his hat brim. He had come into the house, hungry and dejected in spirit. His blue eyes seemed veiled the way they were when he was hurt and his mouth had a grim look. Laurie didn't know yet what had been wrong but she had known instinctively that something which meant a lot to him had gone wrong at the office. She could have made over him, petted him up a little, built up his spirits if it hadn't been for her own story plot.

She felt as badly as he did. Her blue eyes were veiled over and her nerves were taut because no matter how hard she tried she could not seem to do anything with the story she was working on. The words just wouldn't come and the blank paper in her typewriter had glared at her all day as though it were just daring her to have an idea. She had come down at last and found her house dusty and the breakfast dishes still unwashed and the rain pounding cold and damp on the windowpanes. And she wanted so much to get the story off because she wanted to get Kenny a bicycle for Christmas.

But their meal had been a poor affair and the fire she had built on the hearth had not completely broken the chill which her moodiness had cast over the house. The flames had licked up around the logs and the sound had been good and the evening could have been the salve that Ken needed to soothe his wounds, whatever they were. But this thing which she had, the thing that had made it necessary

all these years for her to express herself brought with it this sense of frustration when things went wrong and she was powerless against it.

"Oh, well," she said aloud and was conscious again that she often talked to herself, "maybe I can get it off my mind and have Christmas without the bike. Maybe Ken and Kenny would rather have a cheerful home." So she turned and hurried home and stomped off the snow on the porch and went inside and started cleaning the house and planning a good meal for the evening.

THINGS ALWAYS WENT better at home when she gave up her writing. There were smiles at breakfast next morning and the coffee was better for the attention she could give it.

"Good-by, Mom," Kenny called as he rushed out of the house for school. His hair stood up in a little peak in front of his cap and he fastened his helmet tight because the wind had come up and the day was cold. Ken sat at the table reading the paper, relaxing in the few minutes he had left. His shirt collar was crisp and clean against his neck and his tie was bright and becoming to him. He looked like the young attorney which he was. Even the responsible looking frown on his forehead, the frown he always had when he was concentrating, gave him an important look and Laurie was proud of him.

Ken wasn't just an ordinary husband, she reminded herself. Ken was a man, who with the right encouragement and a few well-placed breaks, would go far in his profession. Her own amateurish writing shrunk in her sight as she looked at him and she made a decision. She wouldn't say anything to Ken about it because it would sound as if she were trying to be self-sacrificing, and he would despise that. She would do it quietly but she would do it thoroughly.

AFTER SHE KISSED Ken good-by at the door she went slowly up the stairs and into her

little study. She took the sheets she had been working on out of the drawer and tore them to bits and dropped them into the wastebasket. She looked at the typewriter she had used ever since she had been in college. Dilapidated, to be sure, and an old model which had been secondhand even when her father had bought it for her, but how dear to her it had been. She thought of the dreams which had gone into the keys of that old machine and of the tears that had dropped on it. Maybe some day Kenny would be a writer and he could use this old machine of hers to begin on. He wouldn't have his bicycle because they had had too much expense that year as it was and without the sale of her story she could not buy it for him. But a cheerful home would be the reward. Maybe he would prefer it. She hoped so.

At last she felt that she could conquer the thing which had caused all the trouble. There were dozens of ways in which she could satisfy that creative urge in doing things around the house. Maybe she would learn to crochet. She certainly would have time for more baking. She might try a fruit cake. She would try a fruit cake! She would make Christmas for her family. That could be her gift to them this year.

In the days which followed she read Christmas poetry and baked her fruit cake, the spicy odors from the kitchen welcoming her husband and son home in the evening. She spent some stolen minutes at the window looking out at the snow which still came for a few days at a time now and then. She tried to remember the things she had loved most about Christmas when she was a child and the memory of a tall tree with a silver star on the top kept coming to her mind. Everything in their home seemed to center around the tall tree and the star on the very top. There were other ornaments and long ropes of tinsel but nothing outshone the star. Her father had often told them about the Star of Bethlehem and she always thought of that star coming and settling on their very own tree. In her

imaginative mind the tin star had taken on a shimmering quality and it had seemed to be a very real star right out of the sky.

When she was a child the story of the birth of Jesus had been the most important thing about Christmas and she wondered what had happened to her. She had spent all her time trying to work out a way to get Kenny his bike. Never once had she thought of telling him about the star. She had left that up to his Sunday school teacher. But she was his mother and he was her son. She didn't want to miss the best part of all. She would give him that part of herself this year, too. He was eight years old. He could un-



At Christmas

**The little Christ is born again
At every Christmastide,
The wondrous star appears once
more,
And Love and Hope abide.**

**The meadow flowers spring in our
hearts
Though winter winds blow wild
And men in simple faith return
To greet the Holy Child.**

—ESTELLE FINNEGAN



derstand many things now. He might even be old enough to know that the star and what it represented should always take the top-most place in his life. Everything else must be second. If she could give him that, then Christmas would be complete.

But she remembered too, the dolls she had found under the tree and once there had been the thing she had wanted more than anything else in the world, a dollhouse complete with tiny furniture. A child needed that side of Christmas, too. Kenny should have a bike, too. And very suddenly she thought of a solution. If she had given up her writing she really didn't need her typewriter. Of

course, it wouldn't bring much but typewriters were high now and maybe she could get enough for a good down payment on a bike. Maybe Ken could see his way clear to get the bike if she helped even that much. She felt a little pull at her heart but then she remembered how different things had been in the past weeks and she knew that the best way to see that she wasn't tempted again was to get rid of the typewriter. Then if she should ever awaken some morning with that old urgency to express herself she would bake a cake or shovel snow until she wore it off.

THAT NIGHT after Kenny had done his homework and was safely tucked in bed, Laurie found Ken sitting by the open fire, stretching his sock-covered feet toward the warmth of the flames.

"Ken," she said, and drew up a small stool to sit beside him, very near to him. He looked up from the book he was reading and reached out his hand and put it for an instant on her bright hair.

"Ken, could we get Kenny his bike if I could get twenty dollars for my typewriter?"

Her husband sat up in his chair and stared at her. "Your typewriter? Why would you sell your typewriter?"

She tried to sound nonchalant. "Oh, I don't think I'll be using it any more. I can't do two jobs and do them well and after all my writing is just a whim. I'm going to concentrate on trying to be a good wife and mother."

Apparently Ken wasn't listening much. She didn't know whether she expected him to rush to the defense of her writing or what, but she felt a keen sense of disappointment at the way he so readily agreed.

"Sure, I can dig up the other with that much of a start. He would be thrilled, wouldn't he, to find a shiny bike under the tree? We are going to have a tree, aren't we?"

"Of course," she said, "with a silver star on top." And then she laughed a little, knowing that he was teasing her. She couldn't

(Continued on page 36.)

Toys for Christmas?

Of Course! *But What Kind?*

By Jessie B. Carlson

PLAY IS VERY IMPORTANT to a child. It is much more significant than many adults realize. It is not merely the way in which a child fills in time. It is his way of assimilating and using bits of information, new ideas, and experiences. Play is also one way in which a child works off the strains and tensions of life.

To play successfully, children must have materials. In our generation most children are supplied with commercially made toys rather than having to use the raw materials about them. So, when you buy a toy for a child, you are buying him the tools for living and learning.

The first thing to consider in selecting toys for children is suitability. Toys must be suited to the age and development of the child; to his interests and abilities; and to his varied needs. This means that one does not buy small blocks for building, small beads for stringing, or puzzles with small pieces for the young child whose lack of muscular control and co-ordination prevent satisfactory use of small objects. When small material is provided, the child has an unhappy experience with it, perhaps permanently coloring his attitude toward it. He suffers physical strain due to his inability to handle it. He becomes frustrated and irritated and tantrums may result.

On the other hand, toys should not be too large and heavy for young children to handle. When blocks are too heavy to be handled easily, or a tricycle too large to be

managed, or any toy unwieldy because of size and weight, it is unsuited to the development of the child.

Sometimes materials are provided for children that are beyond their interest and ability. For example, intricate puzzles for three-year-olds, sewing kits for little girls of four, construction toys for very young children can scarcely be used without a great deal of adult help and supervision. This may lead to dulling of initiative, imagination, and creative ability. If adult help is not given, the materials are likely to prove as frustrating as those that produce physical strain. There is also real danger that the emotion that accompanied their use will carry over so that the materials cannot be enjoyed when developing interest and ability would make it possible.

Similarly, if the materials provided are below the abilities and interests of children, they are likewise frustrating and may cause

children to use them in destructive or harmful ways.

CHILDREN HAVE a variety of interests and needs, and they need a variety of toys to meet them. They need toys that will give physical activity. There are materials for balancing and climbing such as climbing apparatus, teeter-totters; wheeled toys to push and pull such as wagons, doll carriages, tricycles, scooters; balls to throw and bounce; large hollow blocks for construction.

Materials for imitative play meet another need of children. These include dolls and doll clothing; housekeeping toys of all kinds; small cars; trains; boats; gardening tools; carpentering tools and the like. These encourage appreciation of work seen in the home, and help the child to begin to know how his parents or other adults feel who care for him.

There is need for toys for use in construction, such as blocks (both hollow and solid), and all kinds of building and construction sets. This type of toy helps a child to give expression to his ideas, develop initiative, imitate work he has seen done in the community and to understand his world.

Creative materials are important, too, such as clay, crayons, paint and the like. Young children use such material in manipulative ways to see what it is, what it will do, how it feels, and, sometimes, how it tastes! However they are gradually used more creatively to express an idea or to work out an emotion.

Another factor to take into consideration when buying toys is their safety. Painted toys should be free from lead coloring, which is poisonous. Likewise paints and



—Monkmeyer

—Watson

Table games for children ten years and older will make a big hit. By then they have learned to work and play together.

crayons should have non-poisonous vegetable coloring. Wooden toys should be made from wood that does not splinter easily. Toys made of metal should be examined to see that there are no sharp edges and corners.

VERY YOUNG CHILDREN do not play well together. So do not give a small child a game that requires cooperation of other children. If you do, you will be disappointed that he does not use it as it is intended. As children grow older, they begin to engage in cooperative play and games come into their own.

Look at the label on the toy you buy. Most toy manufacturers suggest the age level for which the toy is suitable, ways in which it can be used, and purposes it will help to achieve.

Toys which can be used in a variety of ways are better for a child than those which can only be used in one way. For example, blocks can be used for building, to carry around, to represent anything within the child's imagination, but a toy violin can never be anything but a toy violin! As a child uses versatile materials his imagination and initiative are developed as well as his feeling of achievement, and therefore his feeling of worth as a person.

It is not always necessary to buy toys to provide children with play materials. Wooden cheese boxes, prune or cranberry boxes, with the lids nailed on, become hollow blocks. Empty thread and kodak spools provide additional construction material, or may become in turn people to ride in cars, or groceries on store shelves. By the addition of a piece of cardboard or a cone from a roll of paper towels, they become coal to be delivered to a family of dolls.

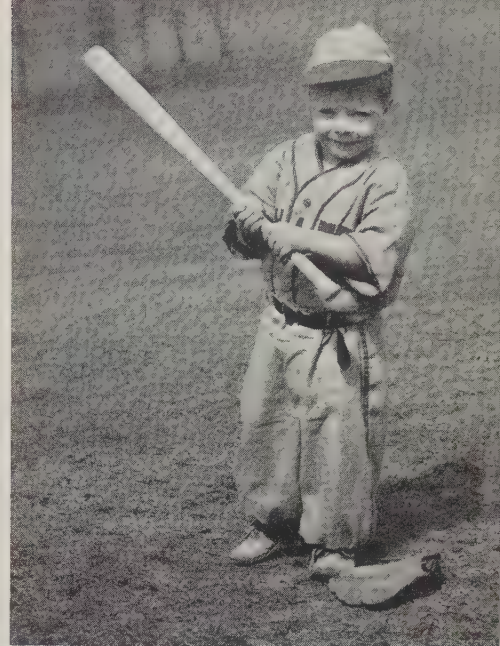
Cans of various sizes, with the lids smoothly removed, make nested materials, as do boxes of various shapes and sizes. Round cardboard cartons, with the lids glued on may also be used for building and stacking, or for rolling. Corks and clothespins may be used in a variety of ways.

LITTLE CHILDREN like to carry things about with them. Small baskets containing jar rubbers, corks, clothespins, spools, small blocks, large wooden beads, tea coasters and the like will furnish pleasure and entertainment.

Children under two like soft, cuddly toys, such as stuffed dolls and animals; toys of rubber or plastic that can be squeezed, pounded, pulled, or floated in water; strings of brightly colored wooden beads to bite or shake; things to carry about; things to fit together and nest such as cans, boxes, blocks that nest, or educational toys; books of linen or plastic, or homemade ones with pictures on one subject pasted to uniform pieces of old window shades stitched together.

FOR CHILDREN from two to four, one should provide dolls and doll clothes; housekeeping toys; balls and bean bags; wheeled toys; cars; wooden trains (either commercially made ones or homemade from wooden cheese boxes with lids nailed on, the addition of round blocks and spools, and fastened together with screw hooks and eyes); Blocks (either commercially made ones or homemade from scrap lumber or lumber bought for the purpose and cut to standard size and carefully sanded); things to fit together such as commercially made or homemade color cones, form peg boards, and pounding boards; simple puzzles; books; clay; large crayons; blunt pointed scissors; climbing and balancing equipment (commercially made or homemade from sturdy wooden boxes of varying sizes, wooden casks, planks and wooden horses of different sizes sanded and painted to prevent splintering).

Children four to six will use the same materials as those from two to four, but will welcome the addition of paints, both tempera and finger paint; carpentering tools; equipment for dramatizing, such as discarded adult clothing and shoes. hats and gloves, jewelry and purses, discarded window drapes, scarves, large scraps of material of various colors and textures; more



—A. Devaney, Inc.

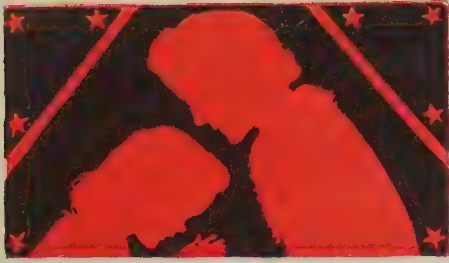
Isn't he cute? But while it pleases dad dress him up, Sonny will enjoy building blocks more for Christmas.

intricate puzzles; and books suited to their developing abilities.

Children from six to eight begin to enjoy mechanical toys, such as cars and trains which run from batteries, springs or electricity; mechanical household toys, such as electric stoves and irons; a variety of dress up clothes including those for nurses, doctors, policemen, cowboys, and the like; simple games; and simple hobbies.

Older children are beginning to make collections and develop hobbies, such as weaving, bead work, stamp collecting, puppets, and marionettes. They are usually interested in Scouting and Campfire Girls' programs, and welcome gifts that advance them in these activities. More intricate games are popular and books are prized possessions.

Many parents know the kind of toys their children should have and they are distressed when relatives and friends present the children with those that are inappropriate. A church school class of young parents or a church-sponsored study club might sponsor and arrange for an exhibit of desirable and appropriate toys and materials for children of different age levels, including both commercially made and homemade objects, and thus forestall undesirable gifts.



WORSHIP IN THE FAMILY

with Young Children

“Expose” Them to Christmas

IT may be trite to say that religion is caught more than it is taught, but the fact remains that children are likely to assume the attitudes and emotions of their parents in religious matters quite as much as in other matters.

The month of December has unusual opportunities for children to “catch” your religious feelings. If you are filled with a sense of wonder and awe at the birth of the Christchild, your child will sense it; if your heart is overflowing with good will and a genuine desire to share with others through gifts of love, your child will know this too.

As you begin your physical preparations for Christmas, such as baking cookies, planning and making surprises for friends and loved ones, or decorating the house with holiday attire, it will be natural to talk about the reason for these activities. Such conversation may be a rich opportunity for a brief moment of worship with your child.

“I’m glad for Jesus’ birthday,” you may say. Then with bowed head you may add, “Thank you, God, for Christmas.” Even little children will sense the emotion of such a moment.

Or singing Christmas carols may express just what you and your child may be feeling at the moment. Your own feeling, your facial expression, your tone of voice will often convey more to the child than any spoken word.

Some of the Scriptures about Jesus’ birth might be used for periods of more formal worship. The prophetic utterances which foretold centuries beforehand his coming may give to primary and junior boys and girls new insights and understanding of this wonderful event.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever.

—Isaiah 9:6-7.

The fact that the very place was named where Jesus was to be born adds to its wonder.

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratha, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.

—Micah 5:2.

The beautiful story as told by Luke (Luke 2:1-20) should be shared by the family group. Reading it frequently during the month may help to prepare the family for Christmas Day. Sometime during the day it should be read quietly and reverently as the family meditates about the real meaning of the day.

The story of the coming of the Wisemen, as told by Matthew (Matt. 2:1-12) should also be used by the family during Christmas week. It may help children to understand the custom of gift-giving on Christmas which is so much a part of our heritage and which can have spiritual significance for the giver.

A Litany for Christmas

For Jesus born on Christmas Day
In a manger filled with hay,
Thank you, God, our Father.

For the way He learned and grew
And the many friends He knew,
Thank you, God, our Father.

For His love for girls and boys
As He shares their griefs and joys,
Thank you, God, our Father.

As I think of Him today,
I want to close my eyes and pray,
“Thank You, God, our Father.”

—MABEL NIEDERMEYER McCaw

A Prayer

Dear Father, we thank you for this wonderful day when we celebrate Jesus' birth. Though we call it Christmas and enjoy our beautifully trimmed Christmas tree and give presents to each other, we want to remember above everything the story of Jesus' birth. This is such a merry day because we give and receive. Help us understand, as the Bible says, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Help us to remember those who need help. May we share our happiness with others. For all good things which come from you, we thank you, Father. Amen.

—BEULAH THOMAS

Infant So Gentle

Infant so gentle, so pure, and so sweet,
Love from thy holy eyes children doth greet.
Tenderest words fail all thy beauty to show,
We must adore Thee if Thee we would know.

Infant so gentle, so pure, and so sweet,
See all the children who kneel at Thy feet.
Grant them Thy blessing, O Baby divine,
Lead them unto Thee and make them all Thine.

—OLD FRENCH CAROL

A Christmas Prayer

Holy Father of the holy Christ-Child,
Cause him to be reborn today in our world,
Make each heart a cradle for his nativity,
Each life a temple for his glory,
Each home a workshop for his Spirit,
Each church a sanctuary of his Kingdom,
Until his Presence masters all mankind.
In his Spirit of Love, Amen.

—CHAUNCEY R. PIETY

A Little Song for Christmas

Gently the stars of Christmas keep
Watch o'er the world where He once did sleep,
The Holy Child who was cradled in hay
In Bethlehem town upon Christmas Day.

Sweetly the carols of Christmas ring
As little children happily sing,
Sing of the Holy Child whose birth
Blessed all the peoples upon the earth.

—ELEANOR HAMMOND

The Friendly Beasts

Jesus our brother, strong and good,
Was humbly born in a stable rude,
And the friendly beasts around Him stood,
Jesus our brother, strong and good.

"I," said the donkey shaggy and brown,
"I carried His mother up hill and down,
I carried her safely to Bethlehem town;
I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown.

"I," said the cow all white and red,
"I gave Him my manger for His bed,
I gave Him my hay to pillow His head;
I," said the cow all white and red.

"I," said the sheep with curly horn,
"I gave Him my wool for His blanket warm,
He wore my coat on Christmas morn;
I," said the sheep with curly horn.

"I," said the dove, from the rafters high,
"Cooed Him to sleep, my mate and I,
We cooed Him to sleep, my mate and I;
I," said the dove, from the rafters high.

And every beast, by some good spell,
In the stable dark was glad to tell,
Of the gift he gave Immanuel,
The gift he gave Immanuel.

—TWELFTH CENTURY CAROL

The Gift

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise man
I would do my part—
Yet what can I give Him,
Give my heart.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Thanks for God's Care

Dear God, while the winds blow hard we want to thank thee for comfort inside our home, for warmth and music and books to read. Then when we come to the dinner table we thank thee for good things to eat and for a good father and mother who give these things to us. We thank thee for thy help to them. Amen.

—BEULAH THOMAS



Fun Before Christmas

By Doris Clore Demaree

ELLEN COUNTED HER MONEY slowly, and then she counted it again, but no matter how many times she counted it, it was the same. She had only seventy-six cents left for Christmas gifts and that just wasn't enough for all to whom she wanted to give.

"What can I do?" she asked her mother who usually had such wonderful ideas.

"Make a list of those to whom you would like to give," Mother suggested.

Ellen sat down and began to write. When she had finished she handed the paper to her mother. The list looked like this:

GRANDMOTHER

MRS. JONES (she always gives me cookies)

MISS BELLE (my Sunday school teacher)

RUTH (my best friend)

JON (who lives across the street)

"This will be fun," suggested Mother after she had thought for a minute. "Put on your wraps and run down to the drugstore. Get a package of colored construction paper and a bottle of white shoe polish. While you are gone I'll get out some things I have here and when you get back you can begin to make your gifts."

"But what will they be?" begged Ellen. "Please tell me!"

"Run along now or we won't have time to make anything," laughed Mother.

ELLEN PUT ON HER WRAPS, picked up her purse and ran down to the drugstore on the corner. All the time she kept thinking to herself, "What-can-it-be? What-can-it-be?" But Ellen didn't know.

"What kind of a Christmas gift can I make with the paper and shoe polish?" Ellen asked Mr. Salome as he wrapped them with holly paper.

"It's a mystery to me!" he laughed. Mr. Salome didn't know.

"Maybe Mother doesn't know," laughed Ellen as she hurried out of the store.

When she got back home Mother had a pile of newspapers, some pins, an old toothbrush, and a small piece of window screen lying on the kitchen table.

"Before you take off your wraps," she said, "Get three or four pieces of evergreen."

Soon they were ready to begin. "First, we will make gifts for Grandmother, Mrs. Jones and Miss Belle," suggested Mother. "Choose three sheets of paper, one for each person. You can choose the colors you like best.

Ellen looked at the sheets of paper. She chose a lovely blue, a deep red, and a bright green. They covered the table with a thick layer of newspapers and laid the papers on top. Mother showed Ellen how to pin the sprays of evergreen to each piece of paper so it looked best. They poured shoepolish into the saucer and Mother showed Ellen how to dip the brush lightly into the polish and then to run the brush over the piece of screen as she held the screen over one of the papers. Ellen thought it was going to be a queer Christmas gift but she hoped Mother knew.

Finally Mother, said, "I think that is enough on each one. Wash your brush and screen and your hands."

By that time the polish was dry. Ellen carefully pulled out the pins and lifted the polish splattered pieces of evergreen from the papers.

"O-o-o-oh!" she squealed, "they are lovely!"

And they were—three lovely spatter pictures. Mother trimmed a little off each edge of the paper so Ellen could paste them to other sheets of paper for a "frame" and the pictures were ready to wrap.

"It is time to get supper now," said Mother. "Clean up the table and tomorrow we will make a gift for Baby Marie."

"I can't wait to begin it," said Ellen as she danced about the table. "Making gifts is lots more fun than buying them."

The Kitten's Christmas

By Joseph S. Clarke

VERY EARLY CHRISTMAS morning found Martha Jane's home very dark and quiet. Many presents were beneath the beautiful evergreen tree in the living room. Even Martha's little black and white kitten, Spotty, had not been forgotten, for there was a small red ball just for him.

Spotty was always placed in the basement at night, but, in the excitement of getting ready for Christmas, Mother forgot all about him. He had hidden behind the Christmas tree and gone to sleep.

Shortly after midnight Spotty woke up and started winding in and out among the presents beneath the tree. He spied a silvery ornament on the tree and jumped at it. It fell to the floor with a crash! Next he found his ball and had a lot of fun playing with it for awhile.

He soon tired of this, however, and went to the kitchen in search of more excitement. He jumped on a chair, then upon the kitchen cabinet.

This was a naughty thing for Spotty to do and he knew it. He had been punished for jumping upon tables and had not done this bad thing for a long time.

A large pan was on the cabinet and Spotty, thinking there might be milk in it, stood up and placed his front feet on the edge of the pan and looked inside. Just as he did this, the pan overturned and rolled off the cabinet and down to the floor with a crashing noise.

Spotty was frightened and so he jumped off of the cabinet and ran to the dining room. As he stopped, a small gray creature sped past him and ran into the kitchen. Spotty knew at once that it was a mouse.

He saw it run beneath a chair and made a leap for it. The mouse tried to escape but, as quick as a wink, Spotty caught it.

Martha's father was waked by the noise when Spotty knocked over the pan from the cabinet. He went downstairs and switched on the light in the kitchen. Then he saw the pan on the floor and Spotty playing with the mouse near-by.

When Jesus Was a Baby

By Eva McCallum

ONE TIME Mary was away from home. She was in a town where there were a great many people. Mary could not find a room in which to sleep. There was no room left for Mary in the large house where people stayed when they were away from home. There was no room any place.

Joseph was with Mary. Joseph asked the man at the big house, "Do you know of any place where we can rest? Mary is very tired."

The man said, "There is a stable back of the house. The sheep and cows have grass and hay to eat there, and you can make a bed on the grass and hay."

Mary and Joseph found that the grass and hay made a soft bed. Mary was glad to rest.

That night a baby was given to Mary, and the baby had a bed on the grass and hay, too.

Mary loved the baby and she called his name Jesus.

And that was when Jesus was a baby a long, long time ago.

From *Guiding Nursery Children in Home and Church*, by McCallum.

Martha's father picked Spotty up and carried him to the basement as the kitten held tightly to the mouse. He closed the basement door and went back upstairs.

"What was wrong?" asked Mother.

"Spotty caught himself a Christmas present," answered Martha's father. "He knocked a pan off the cabinet while after a mouse." Martha's father did not know that Spotty, naughty kitten that he was, had jumped upon the cabinet before he even saw the little mouse.

From *Storyland*.



The Jar of Rosemary

By Maud Lindsay

Three generations have read and loved this story. We are pleased and proud to send it this Christmas to Hearthstone's younger readers.

THERE WAS ONCE a little prince whose mother, the queen, was sick. All summer she lay in bed, and everything was kept quiet in the palace; but when the autumn came she grew better. Every day brought color to her cheeks, and strength to her limbs, and by and by the little prince was allowed to go into her room and stand beside her bed to talk to her.

He was very glad of this for he wanted to ask her what she would like for a Christmas present; and as soon as he had kissed her, and laid his cheek against hers, he whispered his question in her ear.

"What should I like for a Christmas present?" said the queen. "A smile and a kiss and a hug around the neck; these are the dearest gifts I know."

But the prince was not satisfied with this answer, "Smiles and kisses and hugs you can have every day," he said, "but think, mother, think, if you could choose the thing you wanted most in all the world what would you take?"

So the queen thought and thought, and at last she said:

"If I might take my choice of all the world I believe a little jar of rosemary like that which bloomed in my mother's window when I was a little girl would please me better than anything else."

THE LITTLE PRINCE was delighted to hear this, and as soon as he had gone out of the queen's room he sent a servant to his father's greenhouses to inquire for a rosemary plant.

But the servant came back with disappointing news. There were carnation pinks in the king's greenhouses, and roses with golden hearts, and lovely lilies; but there was no rosemary. Rosemary was a common herb and grew, mostly,

in country gardens, so the king's gardeners said.

"Then go into the country for it," said the little prince. "No matter where it grows, my mother must have it for a Christmas present."

So messengers went into the country here, and everywhere to seek the plant, but each one came back with the same story to tell; there was rosemary, enough and to spare, in the spring, but the frost had been in the country and there was not a green sprig left to bring to the little prince for his mother's Christmas present.

TWO DAYS before Christmas, however, news was brought that rosemary had been found, a lovely green plant growing in a jar, right in the very city where the prince himself lived.

"But where is it?" said he. "Why have you not brought it with you? Go and get it at once."

"Well, as for that," said the servant who had found the plant, "there is a little difficulty. The old woman to whom the rosemary belongs did not want to sell it even though I offered her a handful of silver for it."

"Then give her a purse of gold," said the little prince.

So a purse filled so full of gold that it could not hold another piece was taken to the old woman; but presently it was brought back. She would not sell her rosemary; no, not even for a purse of gold.

"Perhaps if your little highness would go yourself and ask, she might change her mind," said the prince's nurse. So the royal carriage drawn by six white horses was brought, and the little prince and his servants rode away to the old woman's house, and when they got there the first thing they spied was the little green plant in a jar standing in the old woman's window.

The old woman, herself, came to the door, and she was glad to see the little prince. She invited him in, and bade him warm his hands by the fire, and gave him a cookie from her cupboard to eat.

She had a little grandson no older than the prince, but he was sick and could not run about and play like other children. He lay in a little white bed in the old woman's room, and the little prince, after he had eaten the cookie, spoke to him, and took out his favorite plaything, which he always carried in his pocket, and showed it to him.

THE PRINCE'S FAVORITE plaything was a ball which was like no other ball that had ever been made. It was woven of magic stuff as bright as the sunlight, as sparkling as the starlight, and as golden as the moon at harvest time. And when the little prince threw it into the air, or bounced it on the floor or turned it in his hands it rang like a chime of silver bells.

The sick child laughed to hear it, and held out his hands for it, and the prince let him hold it, which pleased the grandmother as much as the child.

But pleased though she was she would not sell the rosemary. She had brought it from the home where she had lived when her little grandson's father was a boy, she said, and she hoped to keep it till she died. So the prince and his servants had to go home without it.

No sooner had they gone than the sick child began to talk of the wonderful ball.

"If I had such a ball to hold in my hand," he said, "I should be contented all the day."

"You may as well wish for the moon in the sky," said his grandmother; but she thought of what he said, and in the evening when

he was asleep she put her shawl around her, and taking the jar of rosemary with her she hastened to the king's palace.

When she got there the servants asked her errand but she would answer nothing till they had taken her to the little prince.

"Silver and gold would not buy the rosemary," she said when she saw him; "but if you will give me your golden ball for my little grandchild you may have the plant."

"But my ball is the most wonderful ball that was ever made!" cried the little prince; "and it is my favorite plaything. I would not give it away for anything."

And so the old woman had to go home with her jar of rosemary under her shawl.

THE NEXT DAY was the day before Christmas and there was a great stir and bustle in the palace. The queen's physician had said that she might sit up to see the Christmas tree that night, and have her presents with the rest of the family; and everyone was running to and fro to get things in readiness for her.

The queen had so many presents, and very fine they were, too, that the Christmas tree could not hold them all, so they were put on a table before the throne and wreathed around with holly and with pine. The little prince went in with his nurse to see them, and to put his gift, which was a jewel, among them.

"She wanted a jar of rosemary," he said as he looked at the glittering heap.

"She will never think of it again when she sees these things. You may be sure of that," said the nurse.

But the little prince was not sure. He thought of it himself many times that day, and once, when he was playing with his ball, he said to the nurse:

"If I had a rosemary plant I'd be willing to sell it for a purse full of gold. Wouldn't you?"

"Indeed, yes," said the nurse; "and so would anyone else in his right senses. You may be sure of that."

The little boy was not satisfied, though, and presently when he had put his ball up and stood at the window watching the snow which had come to whiten the earth for Christ's birthday, he said to the nurse:

"I wish it were spring. It is easy to get rosemary then, is it not?"

"Your little highness is like the king's parrot that knows but one word with your rosemary, rosemary, rosemary," said the nurse who was a little out of patience by that time. "Her majesty, the queen, only asked for it to please you. You may be sure of that."

But the little prince was not sure; and when the nurse had gone to her supper and he was left by chance for a moment alone, he put on his coat of fur, and taking the ball with him he slipped away from the palace, and hastened toward the old woman's house.

HE HAD NEVER been out at night by himself before, and he might have felt a little afraid had it not been for the friendly stars that twinkled in the sky above him.

"We will show you the way," they seemed to say; and he trudged on bravely in their light, till, by and by, he came to the house and knocked at the door.

Now the little sick child had been talking of the wonderful ball all the evening. "Did you see how it shone, grandmother? And did you hear how the little bells rang?" he said; and it was just then that the little prince knocked at the door.

The old woman made haste to answer the knock and when she saw the prince she was too astonished to speak.

"Here is the ball," he cried, putting it into her hands. "Please give me the rosemary for my mother."

And so it happened that when the queen sat down before her great table of gifts the first thing she spied was a jar of sweet rosemary like that which had bloomed in her mother's window when she was a little girl.

"I should rather have it than all the other gifts in the world," she said; and she took the little prince in her arms and kissed him.

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I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day

**I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men!**

**I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men!**

**Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good will to men!**

—HENRY W. LONGFELLOW
Houghton Mifflin Company, Publishers.

"TAKE" Television?

Wherever television is families are facing problems of where and how to use it. Here are some ways a Christian home can "take" television.

YES, WE HAVE three daughters, but we hardly see them anymore."

This was Mrs. Jones's response to a visitor's inquiry concerning her girls.

"You see, we bought a television set and had it installed in the basement playroom. Since then as soon as the children can get home from school and tuned in, they do. Of course, we know where they are, but we might almost as well have no family because we hardly see the children. It is nearly impossible to get them to come upstairs for supper."

"Well," remarked the visitor, "this is sorry, indeed. I thought television was something to make for closer family relationships."

Soon after, this same visitor called on the Greens. "I see you have a television set too."

"Do we have a television set! We practically had to remodel our entire living room in order to have it installed," was the somewhat heated reply. It seems that the Greens, wanted to be sure that their friends and neighbors could enjoy the television set too, so they made it a center of interest in their living room.

Now, a center of interest when it calls only for a passing glance is one thing, but when several people have to be grouped around it for long periods of time, is quite another. Why even the somewhat simple thing of having enough chairs was a problem. Not only close friends came to enjoy the television, but folks they had not heard from in years began to drop around. Even some people who were friends of the friends of the Greens discovered they had television and found it enjoyable to drop in. Soon the Greens had not only to remodel the living room, but to remodel their habits of living in the evenings. Their own personal schedules had to be adapted to their friends. It was beginning to wear on the Greens and the furniture and rugs, too.

THE VISITOR WENT to one more home for now, she wanted to take her own personal poll of what television was doing to families. She went next to the Smith home. Mrs. Smith was most cordial and invited her to come in. After the regular exchange of amenities, our visitor ventured the question.

"How do you like your television set?" she asked.

"Well, now that we have learned how to use it, we like it fine," was the hearty reply.

"What do you mean, 'now that we have learned how to use it'? Didn't the company demonstrate how to work it when you bought it?"

"O, that part of it was simple enough. The mechanics are quickly learned. Even our five-year-old can operate it now. But what I was talking about had to do with us—not with the television set at all. At first, of course, we were simply delighted with this new miracle of our day. We spent every minute we could watching the programs—any program that we could get. Putting it mildly, we were thrilled to death with it. Just think, able to see the major events and to get free movies right in our own home. Of course, we should have known that we had paid for our movies when we invested in the steep cost of the receiving set, but it has been worth all that."

"You really think television is valuable to your home now?"

"Yes, but for a while we were in serious doubt. You see, while it was still just a novelty, we found ourselves watching about all the programs presented. I just had to tear myself away in order to do household tasks. The children complained when mealtime interfered with the programs. Our oldest boy began to neglect his homework, and my husband spoke frequently of eyestrain. Well, a simple talk-it-over session among us revealed we had been overdoing it.

"You mean then that using television is sort of like using anything else?"

"Just plain ordinary common sense is the only thing we needed."

AND THAT IS REALLY all it takes in order to "take" television. Using it in moderation and with some common sense, this wonderful new instrument can enrich family living unbelievably.

Let us look briefly at some of its assets. It can bring the impressions of events with the combination of sound and sight which makes them more interesting. Through television, you can hear about things faster than any other way and you can see things happening better than if you were right on the spot. The television camera can get into the middle of actual happenings and portray them with accuracy to the smallest detail. Very few people could have front seats at the inauguration of the president of the United States. Yet, with the aid of television, thousands of our citizens had "front seats."

By Pearl Rosser

In a hospital in Pennsylvania where formerly only a few medical students could gather around to observe in close detail the performance of surgery by skilled doctors, fifty could see even the smallest dissection via television in full color.

Another tremendous asset of television is its ability to bring into our homes the talent of outstanding artists with greater opportunity for appreciation by actually seeing them. Toscanini conveys a great deal more in the expression of pure music when one can observe his own devotion and inspiration in the facial expression of the great artist. Great sports events and great religious events can be experienced by thousands of people otherwise unable to attend.

BY NO MEANS LEAST among the assets of television, that of bringing the family together. Someone said, "Television can reunite the family circle."

Now, what is to be done? Surely we are not going to give away our television sets. Television is a wonderful instrument. It is here to stay. It will not replace the art of reading nor will it dispense with radio. Television has its place in the scheme of things.

Families should talk about the proper use of television before the set is purchased, and surely before it is delivered to the home. Some questions to consider are: "Where shall it be placed in our home?" The answer to this may depend upon the next question. "What programs are available over television and which are the programs we shall want to see?" At this point the family ought to decide how much of the time the television set will be tuned into programs that all will enjoy and how much of it shall be allotted to individuals. In most instances the set should be in the place that will allow for individual and group viewing, and will not interfere with other rooms being used for other things. It might be better to keep the living room free for the normal types of activities, a place where friends can be entertained without necessarily looking at television.

THE AMOUNT OF TIME which individuals or groups within the family will spend looking at television will, of course, depend upon the age group and the other responsibilities of various individuals.

Children in school need outdoor exercise as well as other indoor activity. Home assignments for school work need to be done. Mother's housekeeping tasks call for self-control regarding television enjoyment.

So, most of the problems relating to television are the ones that have come with every new invention. We must learn how to get the most out of it, but we also must use common sense and self-control. We must learn to use it with balance in relationship to other activities. Above all, television should integrate the family and not be a source of division. It should be a source of enrichment and not be allowed to bring vulgar displays into the home.

Parents are the ones who have the greatest responsibility, but it should also be made a matter for the whole family to decide whether or not you can "take" television.



—A. Devaney, Inc.

RIGHT: In a place to itself, the television set can be viewed by individuals according to their interests.



—Monkmeyer.

—Merrim.

WRONG: With television as the center of interest in the living room, reading, visiting, entertaining and fellowship are impossible there.

Those in Favor Say "Aye"

By Clarissa R. Koehler

MY MOTHER says I can't go" . . . "I know we've only been talking for twenty minutes, but my father says I have to hang up" . . . "My mother says no more movies this month" . . . "My father says we can't afford it."

Who makes the decisions in most of our homes? The small fry would probably answer, "My mother"; the adolescent, "My parents"; the parents, simultaneously, "My husband," "My wife!"

Each year near Mother's Day our churches concentrate their thinking on the theme of family life in the Christian home. We make high resolutions that during the coming year we will do certain things together as a family. We will play together, eat together, work together, worship together and work out money-matters together. From now on, we solemnly affirm, we will live together as a democratic unit. We will have a family council. On second thought, maybe we will not go that far, but we will see that each member of our family has a secure place in the home, and together we will make all decisions that affect our family life.

It is marvelous while it lasts. We discuss burning issues calmly and act in the light of our best collective judgment. All is well until that Tuesday when Tom comes home with the ultimatum, "Our Scout Troop is going to camp for the week end and I have to take cake and fifty cents." A storm of protests arise: What about your Sunday school class, your sitting together in church, your studying for Monday's history test? Democracy in the home teeters on its unstable foundation as Tom insists, Father thunders, Mother vacillates, and the girls shrewdly await the ultimate decision.

Daylight-saving time arrives and, on Monday for the regular

six o'clock dinner, sixth-grade Mary arrives home at 6:20. On Tuesday she breezily enters at 6:30. "Your punishment," says Mother firmly, "will be that you cannot go outdoors after supper for the rest of the week." A family decision? A result of talking over changed clock time vs. the slanting rays of the sun and a resultant tardiness on Mary's part? After all, Family Week was in May and this is June!

THE END OF THE SCHOOL term arrives and with it comes a request from the oldest child. Junior High graduation is practically upon us and Ann simply must have a new white dress, and white shoes, and a nice gift would be a bedside radio and/or a watch, and every time she views her too rapidly disappearing allowance all she can say is "Wha' hoppen' to it?" and now it simply must be raised. During the ensuing pause for breath just who decides which expenditures are necessary and which unnecessary?

All praise to the homes where decisions affecting individual members of the home or the family as a unit are made by the members of the family in a family council. Family Week resolutions are hard to keep the first year, but once an honest effort is made it becomes easier and easier to say, "It has been moved and seconded . . . all in favor say 'aye' . . . opposed, 'No,'" and then abide by the group decision.

It is unfortunate that so many of us become tongue-tied with self-consciousness when we attempt to put into practice some of our deepest convictions. The family altar in the home is something that many families want and all families need. Yet how difficult it is for us daily to gether together children and parents for the spoken meditation, scripture, and prayer. The spirit, indeed, is will-

ing but the follow-through is weak. So it is with the family council. We recognize the need for voicing opinions on items that make up daily living, but when it comes to sitting down together, the cat gets our tongue. Self-consciousness again defeats a noble resolution.

What to do? What do you do in mid-July when the thermometer stands at 96 degrees and the ice-cold waters of the rock-bound coast of Maine are just five feet in front of you? Either you stand longingly, or you grit your teeth and plunge in. It is a lot more fun to be in, to splash around in the sea of family life, and you come out a lot cleaner in heart and mind and soul.

SUPPOSE THERE ARE CERTAIN issues at stake, minor problems to be solved, or simple questions to be answered. At given times, maybe Sunday evenings, the family sits down and presents for action the week's pattern of living.

The simpler questions may involve bedtime hours, cleanliness, study habits, poorly planned meals, the use of the radio, the amount of time in and away from home. Specific problems might be an overabundance of quarreling on the part of children or parents, discourtesy to adult or juvenile friends, fears and uncertainties, an equitable distribution of money, participation in church affairs.

One member of the family is consistently unkind and thoughtless. Perhaps unknowingly someone has been deeply hurt and over the years has developed a feeling of not being wanted. Now is the time to provide a place where each member of the family can rely on a considerate, thoughtful group discussion.

Democracy in action demands that a fine discrimination be made between necessary parental discipline and child response. A bal-

ance must be maintained between decision-making and obedience to fixed law. There will always be an adult responsibility for the young which includes guidance in group decision-making. A subtle influencing in situations that can best be solved through experience gained by longer living is not necessarily parental domination. On the other hand, it is very necessary—for a child to learn how and why to say “opposed” or to give an honest disagreement at the right time. A child is more secure in his home life if he knows that he too has a veto power.

A SEEING-EYE DOG is highly trained in the paths of obedience and cooperation. He and his master work together as a unit. Yet we are told that the most important lesson the dog has to learn is when to disobey. The test of his real usefulness comes when, to protect the life of his master, he has to make a solitary decision that is contrary to an expressed command. So in the most cooperative of families there may come moments when either child or parent makes an unwise decision, or the majority opinion is wrong. It is then that disobedience to the expressed decision is a lifesaving action. Would that we had the consecrated intelligence to recognize these moments when they come!

The atmosphere of the home affects family decisions. This past winter a mother was told by her physician that her gall bladder was in a bad condition and he recommended surgery. An unsatisfactory alternative would be medicine and a restricted diet. The mother went home and as the family came in one by one she gave them the doctor's report. That evening the family spent hours talking over the situation. They methodically listed the difficulties of an operation: expense, the need for a housekeeper, pain for Mother, time that Father would need to take from his business to travel the long round trip to the hospital for visiting hours.

Equally methodically the family came to a decision. The expense was carefully listed and all agreed to a temporary but specific paring



—H. Armstrong Roberts

Knowing about family finances is part of democratic living. This is where training in Christian stewardship starts—where the child's attitude toward material things is set.

of the household budget. The housework was charted on a large sheet of paper. Each person would prepare his own breakfast and tidy his room, lunches would be purchased at school, Jane and Dick would do the daily cleaning, and Helen would prepare the dinners. Father would do his work mornings and evenings and late at night in order to have afternoons free for visiting the hospital. All four would pray for Mother and trust God to care for her. Immediate hospitalization was the decision.

There was the family council in action. Each one could express himself freely, and at the same time assume the obligation which was his responsibility as a member of a democratic group.

In times of crisis we receive strength to think clearly. What about those pesky minor problems? How can we remember to submit them to the same family council? The answer is probably that good old adage, “Practice makes perfect.” Over and over again the child must say to the parent,

“Wait a minute now. Just who is making this decision?” The parent must say to the child, “Let us sit down and have the whole family talk this over.” Then, having taken counsel and reached a decision, may the Lord give us sufficient intelligence and grace to abide by it peacefully.

Biblegram Solution

(See page 16.)

St. Luke 2, 10-11.

“... I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”


A Noel	L Holly
B Woody	M Cupid
C Joseph	N Buoy
D Stable	O Thrifty
E Sunday	P Dasher
F School	Q Hair
G Tidiest	R Favorite
H Frigid	S Saviour
I Coin	T Booth
J Whirligig	U Giant
K Notch	

Breezing through daily chores, a wife
suddenly feels . . .

Taken for Granted

By

Lulu M. Stalker



DULCIE WAS GLAD when the babies were tucked in for their afternoon naps. Snapping the switch on the radio as she came into the living room, she sank into the deep cushions of the big chair with a sigh of relief. It would feel so good if she could just sit and do nothing for hours, but the heap of socks that lay on the end table beside her clamored for attention. Tiny white wools, middle-sized bright colored, huge brown and gray ones—all were awaiting the attention of her nimble fingers. She threaded her needle and reached for a sock.

The radio gradually picked up volume and a voice edged its way into her consciousness.

"What about your husband, dear listener? Is he treating you like a sweetheart—or just a wife?" Dulcie dropped her work and sat up very straight. That was her pet peeve, seeing that question tossed about in print every time she picked up a popular magazine, or listening to it in movie shorts. Why did they hammer on it that way?

Dulcie was definitely not worried about Dick. And she could safely wager her best lipstick, which she seldom had time to apply anyway, that he wasn't worried about "holding" her. She didn't want him to be. They loved each other, had promised "till death do us part," so naturally Dick had a right to expect. . . .

"Does the man in your life take you for granted?" the saccharine voice flowed on. "Can it be your fault? Are you letting down? Making him too sure of you? Of course, if you are one of the few fortunate women who are absolutely sure. . . ." The pause was significant. "Why, you may just switch to some other program, but *don't be an ostrich!*"

On and on the voice droned, but Dulcie didn't follow. Instead she started scouting madly down the bewildering bypaths of her mind, seeking answers to these questions she had always thought—till today at least—beneath her consideration.

"How about the bait you caught him with? Is it getting rusty now that he is securely hooked?"

The bait! That was effrontery! As if she had angled. Still, Dick had often said that until he heard her sing that lullaby in the class play, she was just another girl to him. He had been so proud of her voice. A bewildering sensation, maybe it was fear, squeezed her heart. But how could she keep up her music without a piano? Savagely she began to poke the needle in and out of the sock she was clutching. At least she could darn socks.

WHEN THE FIRST SURGE of self-pity swept past, she began to get a broader picture of her life with Dick. Gloomily she had to admit that it had been a long time, ever since the first baby came, since she had actually paid much attention to her personal appearance, that is, to be really concerned about it. She thought of the gay dresses she used to wear—and the single dark jersey that she now called her Sunday best. Oh, it wasn't Dick's fault. Not a bit. He had suggested that she get something new, "something snazzy" he put it, and gave her the

money for it. It wasn't his fault that she had seen the snow suits first. The old snow suits were getting awfully scrubby and the new ones—a warm feeling again repaid her for the sacrifice when she thought how adorably they cuddled her children. Nobody could blame her for her choice if they could see them.

She rolled two little stockings together into a ball and picked up one of Dick's, staring perplexedly at the size of the hole he had worn. If he'd only change when the hole first came but, happy-go-lucky that he was, he was always forgetting.

She came back to her problem. Dick had been acting funny lately. A little preoccupied as if he had something important to decide, something he didn't seem anxious to share with her. Sometimes when she spoke to him, he jumped guiltily as if she were trespassing. And last week, when she hinted . . . it was merely a suggestion and she told him so . . . that her household allowance would soon need upping, he had seemed displeased. Could she help the way prices skyrocketed? Besides, she never asked him what he did with the money he handled.

"Don't let him get too sure of you." That's what the voice had said. Maybe there was something in that. Dulcie had never dreamed such a state of affairs possible, but Dick never showed the least sign of being jealous of her. Didn't he care? Heretofore she had been proud of his confidence. Now she wondered. Confidence or indifference? One could easily be mistaken for the other.

"How does one go about sharpening up?" she asked herself. With two babies to mind and practically no extra cash? Bobbie was three, plus, and Ken just thirteen months to the day. They didn't really leave her much time to study on glamour. Still . . . maybe they were right, those shorts, the magazines, that voice.

"Snap out of it," she told herself sternly. "Get on the job. There's at least an hour before the children wake up. Instead of doing that darning, you must get busy on Dulcie. See what you can do with her. That gal could sure use a

little glamour if I ever saw one that could!"

Quickly her thought flew to a jar of some new cream that had sat on her dresser since Christmas, the gift from a girl friend. "A delightful, effective masque," it said on the label, "tones up the skin and makes you look like a new woman." Impulsively Dulcie tossed the darning onto the ottoman. Now . . . today . . . she would begin.

"Before applying the masque," she read, "clean the face with a generous amount of cleansing cream, letting a second application of the cream remain on the face several minutes." That was easy. Tying her short blond curls back with a towel, Dulcie was really generous with the cream, especially that second application. Her heart and soul were in the task.

"Mommie! Mommie!" Kenny, the baby. Today of all days! His querulous cry broke into her consciousness and she dashed toward the bedroom in anxious haste. If only she could get to him before he wakened Bobbie. Neither of them had seemed exactly up to par this day and they needed a lot of sleep. Too late! Bobbie was already sitting on the edge of his bed, rubbing his eyes in tired bewilderment. Resignedly Dulcie picked them up. Tucking one under each arm, she carried them into the living room.

TWO SACKS of groceries," she cried playfully as she dropped her load on the davenport. It didn't work. Neither child was in the mood to play. Kenny still cried, and whether because he disapproved of the noise or because he was putting in a bid for part of his mother's attention, Bobbie began to cry, too.

"Come on, we'll rock!" Drawing the rocker close to the radiator, Dulcie took them both into her lap, cuddling them close.

Gone was every last thought of mystery, glamour, Dulcie didn't even remember the towel about her head or the "generous" amount of cream she had smeared over her face. She did remember to sing, though, the song her boys, all three of them, liked best. "Lullaby, and good night, Thy mother's delight.

. . ." It was like magic. Almost instantly they resumed their nap and Dulcie breathed a prayer of gratitude. If they got a really good rest. . . .

A key turned in the lock. Dulcie leaned forward, turning her ear to make sure that was what she had heard. Dick's step in the hall. What in this world would bring him home in the middle of the day like this? He seemed to be feeling all right at noon. She raised her eyes questioningly as the door swung back and Dick ushered a stranger into their home, a tall, well-groomed stranger. Only then did Dulcie remember the interrupted beauty treatment. Her face grew hot with shame. What would Dick think? Could he overlook her putting him in this embarrassing situation?

"Dulcie, dear," Dick began quietly, his eyes on the sleeping children, his head high with pride, "this is Jim Sheldon. He owns the music store next to our office." He turned to the stranger. "Jim, I want you to meet the best wife any man ever had. Right now, you see, her boys have a priority over her cosmetics but there'll come a day."

QUIETLY HE STOOPED and eased the older child into his arms and tenderly carried him into the bedroom, adding as he disappeared through the door, "Sit down, Jim. Show her your stuff."

Dulcie motioned to the big chair but he chose an occasional and drew it close to hers, an understanding smile lighting his face as he looked down on the sleeping child she held.

"Dick has had this little surprise up his sleeve for more than a year," he began easily, "and he was all for making it a complete job, but I—I figured it might mean a great deal more to you if you were allowed to make a choice." Dulcie stared at the book in his hand. He laid it on her lap for closer inspection. Pianos. Big uprights. Small consoles. Even baby grands. As understanding slowly dawned, Dulcie tossed her head in the direction of the radio and said, half-aloud, "You and your os-triches!"

The Star on the Tree

(From page 21.)

imagine Christmas at their house without a tree.

Laurie wondered why she wasn't happier about the fact that she had succeeded in her campaign to make a successful home for her family. It must be successful if Ken liked it so well that he was willing for her to sell her typewriter with all that that involved. But the glory seemed to go out of her preparations for Christmas.

SHE WENT THROUGH all the motions, all the things she had so carefully planned, like a person in a dream. Her typewriter was gone and the money had gone into the shiny new bike which sat in the coalbin in the basement. She was happy for Kenny but she felt that a part of herself was missing. She knew that now she would never be a whole person again. Yet, with the knowledge that had come to her, the knowledge that Ken thought it was a good idea for her to give it up, that it was a great relief to him, she knew that she could never go back to it again. The thing might come to harass her, to make her almost scream in frustration, but she could never go back to it now. The knowledge that Ken felt as he did would freeze her fingers to the keys.

Then she rose up with a start. There was no keyboard. The typewriter was gone. She felt like crying but with a great effort of will she made her tears freeze in her heart and she went on trimming the tree and even tried to sing a carol but her voice cracked on the words and she gave it up.

That night, as was their custom, after Kenny was in bed and they had put the gifts under the tree and Ken had brought the new bike up from the basement and set it against the wall behind the tree branches, they sat down together before the fire to open their own gifts to each other.

"You, first," Ken said, and smiled at her as she took the big box and opened it for him and held the new robe up for him to see.

"It is navy blue because it brings out the color of your eyes," she told him and went to him and kissed him.

"Just a minute." He took off the robe and dropped it over the big chair and went out through the kitchen and she heard the back door open and close. Later he came in with snow on his hair and a heavy box in his arms. "I kept it in the trunk of the car," he said. "I carry the key for that!"

He set it down on the floor in front of her and took a knife and slit open the heavy gummed paper which held the box together. "Sorry about the lack of tissue paper and ribbons," he said. When he was down to the last, ready to lift the gift out of the box, he paused and looked straight into her eyes.

"I've known you needed a new one for years," he said, "but not until a few weeks ago did I know how badly you needed it. I had planned to get you an electric mixer but you need this more. Cost twice as much, though," he added, "but I think it will pay its way."

He reached in, while Laurie stared at his hands, fascinated, and brought out the black leather covered portable typewriter.

There was an electric quality to the stillness which lasted for minutes. Laurie couldn't get control of her voice, so she looked straight at Ken and the tears started spilling over and running down her cheeks.

"You can't fool me," Ken said, "I know you better than that. You can't go domestic on me all the time even if you do want to."

You just aren't made that way. You'd be miserable. I love you as a person, Laurie. I want you to be the best whole person you can be. Sometimes I could scream when you get that old urge. I can spot it in a minute when you get up in the morning with that look in your eyes and don't have anything to say and then make such terrible coffee. I always think, 'Ken, old boy, you'd better eat a big lunch today. There won't be a thing fit to eat in this house tonight.'"

"Oh, it's horrible," Laurie sobbed, and he put his arms around her.

"But it's worth it in a few days when you get it out of your system and decide to be domestic again. Boy, the attention I get! And then, believe it or not, I think your stories are important."

Laurie pulled away from him and then laughed through her tears. "How do you know? You never read them!"

"I don't have to read them to know that they're important. They keep you alive and vital and interesting and that's important whether anybody ever reads them or not."

"But I make such a bad mother and such a bad wife on account of them. I leave the breakfast dishes."

Ken took her in his arms again and held her close. "I can't think of anything more monotonous than coming home to a house and knowing every night without a shadow of a doubt that the breakfast dishes will be washed. Besides, when you do take a domestic spell, you put so much enthusiasm in it."

"Thanks for the gift, Ken," Laurie said simply. "Already I have the most wonderful idea for a story. It just came to me while I was looking over your shoulder at that glorious, shimmering star on top of the tree."

"That star?" Ken asked. "It's just a tin star from the dime store, sweetheart."

"No, Ken, it's a glorious, shimmering star right out of the sky that came in through that window and settled on top of our very own tree." And Laurie knew in her heart that it really was.

The Shepherds' Message

By Alfred I. Tooke



Start at the letter B at the top of the star and then, going clockwise, take every seventh letter and spell out a very wonderful Christmas message.



—R.N.S.

the war is over but food, clothing, and linens are still rationed in England. Many a housewife is cooking for two families—her own and her son's—because of the housing shortage.

The British Housewife *Looks Ahead*

By Ethel M. Johnson

AFTER SIX YEARS of war, hardship, privation, and danger, six years of blackouts and restrictions on personal liberty, ten years of rationing and queues, what do the women of England expect from the postwar years—and what are they getting?

The housewife, weary of standing in line for hours at markets and shops, day after day, trying to get food for her family, trying to make the most of her limited ration points, naturally would like to be freed from such inconveniences. She has patched and re-patched the family wardrobe and darned and redarned the family stockings and socks in order to stretch her few clothing coupons as far as possible and, at the same time, present a respectable exterior to the world. Now she longs for a change.

The number of clothing coupons issued to each person varies, from year to year. For some time, twenty-four coupons have been allotted for each six-month period.

In 1948 a "bonus" of twelve additional coupons was given, and shoes were taken off the ration list. These coupons must meet not only the personal clothing needs of the individual, but also must provide for table and bed linen, blankets, and towels. Practically every item of clothing, except shoes, hats, and certain kinds of neckwear, require coupons. This applies to underwear, stockings, gloves, handkerchiefs, and even to yard goods. Clothing was a serious problem for Englishwomen during the war; it is still a serious one more than four years after the end of the war.

DURING THE WAR, the housewife was told repeatedly that the British wartime diet was adequate though monotonous. As she prepared the daily meals, she could agree heartily with the statement that the food was monotonous. Boiled potatoes and cabbage comprised the chief food of the meals, but once or twice a week a few

pennies' worth of meat could be added, or perhaps dried egg or a little fish if she had been lucky in the fish queues. With respect to the adequacy of such meals, she sometimes had doubts. Nevertheless, she patriotically kept up her morale and that of her family and thought of the joyful days when the war would be over and the restrictions and shortages would be memories of the past.

The war ended, but the shortages and restrictions have continued. In fact, with regard to food, the present-day ration in some respects is more stringent than that of war days. The entire fat ration per person for a week is eight ounces. That includes butter, margarine, and lard and represents the total for table and cooking purposes. Here are some of the other items in the weekly allowance: one and one-half ounces of bacon (about one strip), one and one-half ounces of cheese, four ounces of jam or margarine, eight ounces of sugar, two ounces of tea, twenty cents worth of meat, and from one and one-half to three pints of milk, depending on the season.

Practically all other food items, such as meat, tinned fish, canned vegetables and fruits, cereals, crackers, sirups, dried fruit, pow-

dered milk, and powdered egg require points when they are available, which is not always the case. A can of sirup takes eight points and a can of Spam approximately twenty-six points. Inasmuch as the monthly point allowance is twenty-eight, it is obvious that the points do not permit a very generous supplement to the rationed foods. In the case of household milk, made from powdered skimmed milk, and in that of powdered eggs, which are mainly imported from the United States, the allowance has been one small package or can per person per month when supplies permitted.

Fresh eggs are still something of a rarity. A housewife may get one a week in the summer and one a month in the late fall and winter. Oranges, grapefruit, and lemons are now on the free list and occasionally can be secured in the markets. Bananas are very scarce; and when any are available, they may be obtained only for children and old people. About the only foods not rationed are fish, fresh vegetables, and fruits and berries, which can be secured only at certain seasons of the year and then in limited quantities and frequently at prices prohibitive for the average family. Even bread, which was not rationed during the war, subsequently was put on the ration list and has only recently been removed.

THE WINTER AND EARLY SPRING of 1947 were among the worst in Britain's history. One disaster followed another in rapid succession. There was bitter cold—the most severe in memory—and heavy snows, blizzards, ice and wind storms. The blizzards were followed by what the English people called the "Great Thaw"; and that, in turn, by the worst floods in three centuries. As a result of these combined calamities, one-third of Britain's normal spring and summer food supply was lost. Not only were crops destroyed but also much livestock and poultry, representing the country's meat rations for months. All this naturally increased the housewife's hardships.

Added to the difficulties of the winter weather, which the British

refer to as the "Battle of the Blizzards," was a critical coal shortage which brought drastic restrictions on the use of coal, gas, and electricity. Somehow, the housewife had to keep her family from freezing and cook what food she was able to secure with practically no coal or gas and with no electricity except during a few hours of the day.

SOME OF THE RESTRICTIONS of the early postwar years have been removed. Shortage exists in many commodities, however, and few persons in America can realize fully the situation in Great Britain or appreciate what a food package from the United States means to many English families.

A woman in London, upon receiving a CARE package from a friend in the United States, wrote rapturously of being "quite overcome at the thought of the friendliness" which prompted the sending of the "magnificent parcel." She enumerated its contents—dried eggs, bacon, margarine, butter, braised beef in gravy, corned beef, liver pate, tea, cocoa, raisins, powdered milk, grapefruit juice, orange juice, dried apricots, yeast, and "a large slab of chocolate."



—R.N.S.

This was one person's official Christmas ration last year in Great Britain. It included twenty cents worth of meat, one cent of tongue, two eggs, one ounce of bacon, four of butter, three of margarine, two of fat, one and one-half of cheese, ten of white sugar, six of tea, six of candy, a can of beans, one of pudding.

She went on to tell of sharing the contents of the precious box.

"Tonight," she wrote, "I am taking some tea to a former governess, age 70, now crippled with arthritis entirely due to the air raids when she slept, or tried to, in damp basements, and who is suffering from malnutrition. I will also take her a portion of the margarine, milk, chocolate, and dried eggs. Also some of the dried apricots which will make a most welcome addition to her diet. I would also like to share some of this parcel with a younger person who works in a tubercular clinic for children. She works very selflessly. She knows no one abroad who would send her a parcel and would be most grateful. She is very undernourished and pale looking and I think some fat and the liver pate might be good for her."

FOOD, HOWEVER, is only one of the English housewife's problems. There are still shortages of nearly everything needed to lighten her burdens. One of the most irksome shortages is that of soap. This is now even more serious than during the war. The present ration is only three small cakes a month per person. Or one can take a small package of soap powder, if it is available, in place of a cake of soap. The soap ration must meet all needs—toilet, bath, laundry, and household cleaning.

Then there is the matter of household equipment. Electric refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, electric irons—these are some of the labor-saving devices which the English housewife hoped to secure after the war. The same applies to the long-hoped-for family car. England is manufacturing automobiles in large numbers, it is true; but most of these cars are for the export trade, as are many of the other manufactured products, such as fine woolens, cottons, linen, and china.

England used up her foreign credits during the war and now must sell her manufactured goods abroad in order to secure neces-

(Continued on page 41.)

Johnny Finds Out



WAIT, HERB!" Johnny called after Herbert Jensen, running up the road to catch up. "What's the big hurry?"

"I want to get home for my skates," Herb answered, slinging his strapped schoolbooks over his shoulder and quickening his pace. "Mason's pond is frozen solid. First ice skating this winter."

"Honest! Mason's pond frozen up so early! Who told you?"

"George Mason told me in school today. Why don't you get your skates and come over?"

"Wish I could," Johnny sighed, "but there are too many chores to do. Aunt Bess isn't feeling well again. I promised to help her after school today. Besides, Uncle Ben might want me to help him grind feed."

"You know, Johnny," Herb was serious, "that aunt and uncle of yours take advantage of you."

"What do you mean?"

"They treat you like a hired man. Help your aunt after school! Grind feed! Do chores! You never have any fun!"

"Why no, Herb," Johnny laughed. "They don't make me do anything. I like to help around

the farm. I have lots of fun with you and the other fellows."

"You only say that because you don't want the gang to know they make you work. Why, everybody knows you're an orphan, and if orphans don't work, people won't keep them around. I'm glad I'm no orphan who has to work for an aunt and uncle. I'm glad I have a real mother and father."

Johnny was too stunned to answer. He was fighting to hold back a burst of hurt tears. He was trying to think of an answer, but before he could, Herb turned into his lane and was hurrying home for his ice skates.

SLOWLY JOHNNY turned and trudged up the road toward home. "Why, everybody knows you're an orphan!" kept whirling through his head. It was the first time anyone ever called him an

orphan. It was the first time he ever thought of himself as an orphan. But he was! Big tears came up in his eyes and blurred his vision so that for the first time in his life he failed to see a cottontail scurry across the road just ahead.

Johnny knew all about his mother and father. He was only a baby when their home burned to the ground and he was the only one saved. He did not remember anything about them. Aunt Bess and Uncle Ben had been mother and father to him ever since.

There was a big frown on Johnny's forehead as he thought out loud. "Aunt Bess and Uncle Ben treat me as if I was their own boy," he said. "A real mother and father couldn't treat me any better—or could they? Maybe everything would be different if I had a real mother and father."

Johnny's heart was heavy as he neared home. Maybe they did let him do too many chores, like Herb said. But they never *made* him do anything. When something had to be done, he did it because he wanted to. They never forced him to do it.

By Paul Zieschang

A sob escaped from deep down inside him where it hurt most. Maybe Aunt Bess and Uncle Ben really did not want him there. Maybe they just felt sorry for him. Maybe they just let him stay with them because he was an orphan and they felt it was their Christian duty to keep him.

Maybe he should run away. But where could he go? This was the only home he had ever known.

JOHNNY WANTED to be alone with his troubled thoughts and tried to get into the house without being seen, but Uncle Ben saw him and called. He was with some men up by the turkey shelters. He motioned for him to come up.

"I'm selling Aunt Bess's turkeys," he smiled at Johnny. "Think you can give me a hand for a few minutes?"

Johnny couldn't answer. He was all filled up. He just took the paper and pencil Uncle Ben pressed into his hand. "Just mark down the weights as I call them out," Uncle Ben said.

The rough looking man handling one of the crates looked at Johnny. He set down the crate and stood with his hand on his hips. "Don't tell me you're going to let that little kid keep weights," he barked.

"Why not?" Uncle Ben asked.

"He's too young. He'll get them all wrong."

Uncle Ben took off his specs and threw an arm across Johnny's

shoulder. He smiled, looking the other man straight in the eye. "Johnny won't mix any weights, mister," he said, "His weights will be the same as your man's. You can depend on Johnny."

The comforting feel of Uncle Ben's arm soothed Johnny's aching heart. His little chest swelled with pride when Uncle Ben said, "You can depend on Johnny." He felt better already.

The man buying the turkeys shrugged his shoulders. He said no more about it. Uncle Ben adjusted his specs and called out the weights to Johnny and the buyer's man, as each crate of turkeys went on the scale. When finished, Johnny totaled his figures. The buyer's man totaled his. Johnny had ninety pounds more.

The rough looking man blew up. "What did I tell you?" he sneered. "The kid got the weights all mixed up. We'll take my man's figures and get straightened out."

"My figures are right!" Johnny bristled in self-defense. He was good at arithmetic. His total was right. He was sure of it. "Please, Uncle Ben! Please add them over!"

Uncle Ben took Johnny's paper and adjusted his specs again. You could see his lips move as he carefully went over Johnny's figures. "These figures total up right," he said when he finished. "Let me see yours."

Reluctantly the man handed his figures to Uncle Ben who compared them with Johnny's. A funny look was on his face when he finished. He seemed angry and spoke in a slow, even tone as if he were trying to control himself. "Before you accuse my boy of being wrong"—he pointed to the buyer's paper—"you had better check your own figures. Here's your mistake. Add ninety pounds to your total."

"My boy!" Uncle Ben called him. Maybe Uncle Ben did like him even if he was an orphan.

AUNT BESS squealed with delight when Uncle Ben, grinning from ear to ear, spread her turkey money all over the kitchen table. "Thanks to our Johnny you didn't get cheated out of the money for ninety pounds," he said, and explained what happened.

Aunt Bess swept Johnny into her big arms. She hugged him tight and planted a big kiss on each of his cheeks. She mussed his hair. "I don't know what we'd do without our boy—do you, Ben?" she said, squeezing Johnny so he couldn't breathe.

Johnny didn't hear Uncle Ben's answer, nor did it matter. Inside he was full of joy and relief. He knew for sure, now, that Aunt Bess and Uncle Ben really did want him for their boy.

Start Your Christmas Tradition Now

(From page 3.)

come to be such an important part of our Christmas tradition. But have you ever tried having a good old-fashioned carol sing? Have you invited in your friends to gather around the piano or better still—to go carolling? Singing for shut-ins and friends and neighbors can be just as much fun as you make it and piping hot chocolate is a welcome treat when you all get back home again.

Some families use their favorite carols and stories as an intimate part of their own Christmas cele-

bration. The custom of rising early on Christmas morning, carrying lighted candles, and marching down the stairs singing a favorite carol is one of the nicest traditions. Gathering around the fireplace on Christmas Eve with just the family and singing carols or reading Christmas stories is fun. Each year our family reads parts of Dicken's *Christmas Carol* and each year it is better than the year before. Some prefer to read the story of the Christ Child or "The Night Before Christmas."

This business of hanging up your stocking for Santa to fill has always seemed a little unfair to father and to the bobby-sock teenagers. We've settled that matter

once and for all by making special socks for each one to hang. Father's is largest, mother's next, and the children's sizes vary according to age. These can be made of red sateen with wide white cuff, outing flannel, tarlatan, or any available material dyed red. Each one should be individual. A little bell in the toe of one sock, the name embroidered, or individual decorations which characterize the owner is most appropriate.

Wrapping Packages Is Exciting

Every child should share the mystery and excitement of wrapping gifts. Simple wrappings can be made from any number of things about the house. A sample wall-

The British Housewife

(From page 38.)

sities for the life of her people and the essentials to keep her industries going. In consequence of this requirement, the housewife must face more years of making over, "making do," and doing without.

FINALLY THERE IS the shortage of housing and of all kinds of housing materials. England, like the United States, has a big housing problem based on the absence of new construction during the war years. It also is based on the increased demand from returned veterans who married just prior to entering the service, or who have married since and want to set up homes of their own for their families. In addition to this problem, England has a serious situation caused by the wholesale destruction of buildings during the war by bombs and fire. The number completely destroyed is approximately three hundred thousand, while those damaged and requiring repair number about four million. Together, these numbers represent one third of all the homes in Great Britain. Added to

this is the backlog from more than six years of deferred building.

DESPITE THEIR HARD-SHIPS and the lack of many things which we in this country have come to regard as necessities, the deepest desires of many women in Great Britain are concerned with other matters. The Annual Conference of Representatives of Unions Catering for Women Workers at their meeting in London in 1948 stressed, above everything else, safety and peace.

Lady Megan Lloyd George, daughter of the former Prime Minister, speaking at a meeting of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, voiced the hopes of Englishwomen for world peace and international friendship and stressed the contribution they can make toward a better world. Passing lightly over the hardships and privations the English people had endured, she urged consideration of the less fortunate countries of Europe. "We in this country," she said, "are still on the right side of the health line. In Europe there are countries not only below that health line, but below the life line. Let us therefore solemnly pledge ourselves not only to save bread but to see that others save it." She urged sup-

port of the United Nations as the only hope of preventing future war. And this support, she said, should be provided "not only in the days when all men speak well of it as they do now, but if it should fall upon evil days, as did the League of Nations."

That represents the attitude of nearly all the Englishwomen in all walks of life today. In spite of the rather drab prospect of slow economic recovery for Great Britain, Englishwomen are not discouraged. They are, in fact, surprisingly cheerful. Perhaps this is because many of them are not so much concerned with worrying about their own difficulties as with trying to help in relieving the hardships of those worse off than they are. There are many who somehow manage to save from their own limited rations enough to send a package of food and clothing to the suffering people of Europe.

Although Englishwomen want to raise economic standards at home, they realize the importance of higher economic standards throughout the world. They are interested in material well-being for themselves and for others. Above all, however, they are interested in world peace and international understanding.

paper book will provide many beautiful wrappings for smaller gifts. Cover pabulum or oatmeal boxes with wallpaper for those presents which are especially difficult to wrap. Children can decorate their own white paper by cutting out pretty pictures and pasting them on. Crayons are useful for writing the name. If your family is large enough, you might stage an annual contest for the most original and attractive wrapping. Much of the beauty of a gift is in the wrapping, especially if it has taken time and thought.

And when everyone has gathered at the table, be sure to provide a

little entertainment for that waiting period between courses. Perhaps little stunts or riddles could be written on the placecards for each guest. There are any number of games which fit the occasion. "Predicaments and Remedies" is fun. Each person on one side of the table thinks of a predicament such as "What would you do if you burned the Christmas turkey?" Each player across the table thinks of a remedy of his own. When his partner asks "What would you do if—?" he replies with his ready-made remedy. Sometimes the suggestions are quite appropriate and,

then again, they are very silly.

Christmas at our house is the highlight of the year not only in a religious sense but also in the close family fellowship which is especially keen at this time. For weeks in advance of the date, we plan and work together for the day and try to put forth our very best efforts whether it be in the decoration of the house, in the baking of a special goodie, or in the planning of some extra fun. Guard carefully your own family customs and cultivate some new ones. It's worth the effort and will leave many a pleasant memory for the future.



Parents are constantly in search of books that will help them to give intelligent direction to the physical, moral, and social development of their children. Many such books have been written for the guidance of parents. A substantial percentage of these books, however, present views and concepts that are not in harmony with Christian principles of thought and conduct. Rarely is a book published on personal relations that contains information of value to both parents and children. Two such publications, however, have appeared in recent months, and are suggested for family reading.

How Life Is Handed On, by Cyril Bibby, \$2.00 (Emerson Books, Inc.), is written for the special guidance of children and younger adolescents. In this book the author presents a clear and simple description of the whole broad process by which life is handed on and maintained. With the aid of drawings and diagrams, he sets forth the facts of courtship, mating, and the birth of young animals and human beings.

Questions Girls Ask, by Helen Welshimer, \$2.00 (E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc.), is an up-to-the-minute revision of a book that teen-age girls have found enjoyable and helpful. The chapters are based on the real problems of conduct which girls encounter. Right principles are set forth. The book presents a frank discussion of social behavior, dress, personality, and cultural background. College as well as high school girls will find this book interesting and profitable.



The Little Golden Books published by Simon and Schuster, are favorites of children everywhere. Their reasonable price makes them favorites of parents, too. There are five new books in this series which young children will enjoy.

The Fuzzy Duckling, by Jane Werner (unpaged, price 25 cents) describes the adventures of a young duck when he went for a walk. When it was time to go home, he was lost, but his mother and nine fuzzy brothers and sisters came across him as they were



Books for the Hearth Side

going home to supper. The story, illustrated by Alice and Martin Provensen, presents the kind of suspense young children enjoy.

Katie the Kitten, by Kathryn and Byron Jackson (unpaged, price 25 cents) tells the typical experiences in the life of a kitten. It is also illustrated by Alice and Martin Provensen, and will be a favorite story of young children.

Good Morning, Good Night, by Jane Werner (unpaged, price 25 cents) contains two stories: the first of a little boy who did not like to get up in the morning, and all the efforts to awaken him; and the second of a little girl who did not like to go to bed at night. The pictures by Eloise Wilkin, in addition to the text, may prove helpful to some young children who have similar problems.

Walt Disney's **Bongo**, adapted by Campbell Grant (unpaged, price 25 cents) is a fanciful tale of a circus bear who constantly heard the call of the wide-open spaces. When the circus train was going to another town, the door of his car jolted open and Bongo jumped out. His experiences in the wide-open spaces, and how he made friends there is a thrilling tale for children six to eight years of age.

Another Disney story, **Snow White** (unpaged, price 25 cents) will delight children who are familiar with the old fairy tale and those who have not previously heard it.



Tiny Nonsense Stories, by Dorothy Kunhardt and illustrated by Garth Williams, is the second set of twelve very small books (un-

paged, price \$1.00 per set) in the Tiny Golden Library. Part of the appeal which these sets have for children is the attractive way in which they are boxed. The interior is that of a Super Market, and the exterior a typical city street scene. The cover, with a cellophane window over the books, adds additional street scenes. Each tiny book is complete with appropriate illustrations. Though the type and illustrations are small, the books are easily handled and are fascinating to young children.

Cattail House (published by Children's Press, Inc. unpaged, price \$1.50) by Phoebe Erickson, is a delightful story of a muskrat. His adventures make him acquainted with many animals in the forest.

The end papers show both the front and hind tracks of all the animals mentioned in the story as well as the leaves of numerous trees.



Fun-time Crafts, by James Schwalbach (published by Children's Press, unpaged, price \$1.25) gives suggestions for making a variety of things from the simple materials found in most homes. Many of these are clear enough that an inexperienced child could follow the instructions. In other instances, the instructions are too brief for some children to use them without the help of someone experienced in craft work.

This book would be good for families to use together for creative activities. It would help to answer the question "What can I do now?" that mothers so frequently hear on rainy days.

Symphonic Songs, Rise Stevens, Mezzo-Soprano, with orchestra conducted by Morris Stoloff. (*Columbia Masterworks*.) The album is released in a shellac album of four 10-inch records and on one 10-inch Long Playing Micro-groove record.

Versatile Mezzo-soprano Stevens, an exclusive Columbia recording artist, interprets Tchaikovsky with "Tonight We Love" from his First Piano Concerto, as well as with two excerpts from his tone-poem, "Romeo and Juliet," and his Fifth Symphony. She also sings "Full Moon and Empty Arms" from Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto; "As Years Go By," from Brahms' *Fourth Hungarian Dance*; "Strange Music" from Grieg's *Song of Norway*; "The Lamp Is Low" from Ravel's *Pavane for a Dead Princess*; and "Since First I Met Thee," by Anton Rubinstein.

Familiar Themes from the Opera, Orchestra under the Direction of Serge Dupre. (*Capitol Classics Album*.) Relatively few music enthusiasts are familiar with the complete scores of even the most famous operas, although many themes from these scores are known and loved even by those who have never set foot inside an opera house. These are the highlights . . . the thrilling quartette from *Rigoletto*, the graceful ballet from *Faust*, the stirring Toreador song and Habanera from *Carmen*, Musetta's lovely waltz song from *La Boheme*.

Scriabin: *Poeme D'Extase*, Op. 54. (Poem of Ecstasy), San Francisco



The Spinning Wheel

By Joey Sasso

Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, Conductor. (*ECA Victor Red Seal Album*.) A modern recording of this work, with its vivid and complex orchestration, has been needed for some time. The present issue not only fulfills this need but is doubly welcome because of the special affinity Monteux has for Scriabin's impressionism, strongly suggestive of Debussy and Ravel.

Pervaded by a deep mysticism, the "Poem of Ecstasy" deals essentially with the spiritual side of life expressed in three movements. A kaleidoscopic range of human emotions is described in an involved orchestral texture which

employs an intriguing interplay and overlapping between various sections of the orchestra. In this recording, to the subtleties of tonal color and delicate gradations of volume, the musicians respond with exemplary discipline, capturing the full flavor of the music's shifting emotions.

Liszt: *Les Jeux D' Eaux A La Villa D' Este*. ("Fountains at the Villa d' Este" from *Annees de Pelerinage* (years of pilgrimage), Jose Iturbi, Pianist. (*ECA Victor Red Seal*.) RCA Victor has released as a National Special an exciting performance by pianist Jose Iturbi. "The Fountains at the Villa d' Este" is a product of Liszt's mature years, and in the Iturbi recording the composer's musical picturization of a fountain is projected with vivid tonal imagery.

Especially for Christmas

Christmas Carols of Many Lands (*ECA Victor*). The famous Vienna Choir Boys, under the direction of Viktor Gomboz, have recorded the four ten-inch records of this album. The selections include French, American Indian, Portuguese, Tyrolean, and German carols. A booklet, which tells the history of the carols and gives the words in English, accompanies the album. Several of the songs are familiar to us in English, and it should prove extremely interesting to all to hear such carols as "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht," and "Noel" sung in the original German and French.

Christmas Hymns and Carols (*ECA Victor*). Robert Shaw, well-known young American baritone, together with the RCA Victor Chorale, has recorded this series of twenty-five Christmas hymns and carols on four twelve-inch records. Many of the carols, which are very beautifully arranged, are familiar ones, such as "Joy to the World," "O Come

All Ye Faithful," and "The First Noel." Others, less familiar, include such songs as "I Wonder as I Wander" (an Appalachian folk song), "Go Tell It on the Mountain" (a spiritual), and "I Sing of a Maiden" (a fifteenth-century carol).

Carols by Nelson Eddy (*Columbia record*). Nelson Eddy, long a favorite of American audiences, has recorded on one record four well-known carols with Robert Armbruster and his orchestra. The selections are: "Adeste Fideles," "Silent Night, Holy Night," "The First Nowell" and "Good King Wenceslas."

The Christmas Carol (*Columbia album*). Charles Dickens' immortal story of the miserly Scrooge, whose outlook upon life was changed at Christmas time, can be obtained in a Columbia album. The story was adapted by Edith Meiser, is fascinatingly told by the celebrated actor, Basil Rathbone, and is heightened by music

under the direction of Leith Stevens.

Christmas at the Organ (*Bible-tone Album*). This beautifully recorded Bible-tone album contains four double-faced ten-inch records of favorite Christmas carols played on the Master Cathedral organ, with chimes. A hymnal with the words of the carols is included. The songs played are: "Adeste Fideles," "It came upon the Midnight Clear," "Silent Night, Holy Night," "Joy to the World," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," "Away in a Manger," and "The First Noel."

Chimes at Christmas Time (*Bible-tone Album*). For those persons who would prefer to hear the Christmas carols played on chimes rather than on the organ, Bible-tone offers this album of four records. The hymns are played on the Majestic Tower Chimes, and are those in "Christmas at the Organ." A pamphlet containing the words is included.

What the Churches Ar

ALL THE GREAT religious festivals of the year should be preeminently family days during which the home as a unit is conscious of its blessings, its challenges and its opportunities. Especially is this true of Christmas in this day when it has become so commercialized. Christmas is particularly a festival for the home when adoration and worship are centered in the child Jesus. Churches will this year be giving recognition to the occasion at the morning service on Christmas day as December 25 falls on Sunday. In any event the holiday itself should be emphasized as a time when the family can be together in happy, thankful, Christian fellowship.

The Christmas season is a time when children are easily impressed with the warmth of religious influences. Songs, stories, prayers and the reading from familiar books where the family enjoys them together either in the church or in the home will help to unite the family in common interests and appreciation. Within the family group a single language is spoken concerning the common, everyday practices of life. When this oneness of language, purpose and experience can be enriched with the spiritual warmth that can be found in the proper observance of the Christmas festival, it will not only bind closer the family ties but will form a life-giving force for a stronger and fuller development of each person.

Christmas is the season of the year when this family unity may be carried out with unusual significance. With celebrations centered around the Christ Child in a simple setting of the manger, the entire family is drawn together in purpose and attitude. Celebrations carried out in the church can many times be repeated or extended in some appropriate exercise or service in the home. Here are ways that churches have helped

to make Christmas meaningful for their families.



A FAMILY Christmas party was held at Christmas time in 1948 by the Third Christian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, A. C. Brooks,

Christmas Prayer

O'er far Judaea's sacred hills
A joyous cry was heard,
"A king is born in Bethlehem";
All men took up the word.
Unto the lowly manger crib
Came peasant, seer, king,
And bending low, by love inspired,
Brought each his offering.

Before them, on the manger cot,
They saw God's precious Son.
Their dreams were realized at last—
New life for them begun!
No longer should they grope in night,
For He could heal their sin.
Their hearts were opened at His touch
That love might enter in.

O Savior, on this Christmas Day
Our gifts we bring to Thee;
No gold, no frankincense and myrrh
We bear on bended knee;
Our hearts we bring, to make them Thine;
Our hands, to do Thy will;
Our lives be Thine! O Shepherd kind,
Lead safely past all ill.

—THOMAS CURTIS CLARK

minister. This was a part of a larger emphasis on Christmas which was planned under the leadership of the Home and Family Committee of the church. At the Christmas season the committee directed its activities toward emphasizing Christmas in the home, believing that the church can do much to assist its families

in making Christmas a time of deep spiritual significance.

The family Christmas party was carried out as an evening program in the church. The women of the church served a turkey dinner for the occasion. In order to avoid placing a financial hardship upon any family who wished to attend the dinner, there was no set price for a ticket. Each family paid a share of the cost of the dinner by placing a love gift in an envelope and dropping it in the collection plate. After dinner the group sang carols and watched the showing of a sound movie, "Christmas Rhapsody," and a sound filmstrip, "When the Littlest Camel Knelt." Later, a brass ensemble played Christmas music and Santa appeared with gifts for the children.

As a part of this emphasis on the home during the Christmas season, literature was made available, including the booklet *Christmas In the Home*.¹ Also, through the aid of the committee and others, a bookshelf for family use was established in the church. This bookshelf included helpful and interesting books on the home and family education.

"More and more," says the pastor of Third Church, "we are witnessing the verification of the Psalmist's words: 'Except the Lord build a house, they labor in vain that build it.' We agree with the Psalmist," continued the pastor, "that the nation's life cannot be secure and happy without love, beauty, forbearance, mutual respect, and Christian faith. The church, in helping its families to achieve these goals in their homes, is serving God and the world."



THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Deer Lodge, Montana, of which Mrs. Mary B. Foster is minister, held a Family Christmas Party at the church on Sunday evening, December 19, 1948.

¹Order from your publishing house, 50¢ each.

ing in Family Life

By J. D. Montgomery



An old-fashioned program of musical and literary numbers preceded the party in the church sanctuary. The children from the Beginners through the Junior Department took part with recitations, readings, dialogues, songs, and both instrumental and vocal solos. The junior choir added to the program with two special numbers in song.

The family party then took place in the church basement around a large Christmas tree. As the people entered the basement, each one was served a light lunch of Christmas cookies and salad in paper cups with cocoa for the children and coffee for the adults. The small children played around the Christmas tree while the older children and adults had a period of fellowship.

Following the fellowship period, the group sang together the well-known Christmas carols. The double feature of the party gave it variety, and wide interest was awakened among members and friends of the church.

• • •

IN ONE OF OUR CHURCHES, as reported by Miss Lois Swick, a Christmas service was held in which the kindergarten children were led to an appreciation and understanding of the birth of the Christ Child. This service took place in the church sanctuary with the adults present as in a regular service.

The church altar was surrounded with a beautiful nativity scene with Mary, portrayed by a young girl of the church, sitting by a manger in which lay the baby Jesus (a life sized baby doll).

Children of the kindergarten were prepared for their part in the Christmas program before it began, but without previous rehearsal. Each child was dressed as an angel. The robes used were merely white muslin sewed in sack shape with a draw string at the neck, thus the children's arms did

not detract from their Cherub-like appearance. Each child was dressed in his costume at least one-half hour before the service began in order to become accustomed to it so that his reaction would be normal when he arrived at the nativity scene.

Very informally the children were brought to the sanctuary to see the baby Jesus. No mention was made about the audience of adults and care was taken to make it unobtrusive.

The objective of the service was to make the birth of Jesus a real thing to these children and in doing so to capture the adult audience, as they observed the children's reaction on seeing the baby and Mary.

The children were thrilled and awed with the scene. One small boy stood leaning on the manger for several minutes looking at Mary and the Child. His eyes glowed with joy. He acted as if he had never seen anything to equal it. It could not have been more impressive had it been rehearsed.

The service was supplemented with Christmas music by a choir of older children. Very soft organ music was played as a background during the whole scene.

The people of the audience captured the true Christmas spirit as they saw the joy and awe of the little children in their discovery of the Christ Child.

• • •

SOME CHURCHES have offered help to their families at the Christmas season by furnishing literature that will guide the family in carrying on activities in the home appropriate for Christmas. This has been done in some cases by the church supplying homes with copies of *Christmas in the Home*. It contains Scripture selections, Christmas stories, carols, suggestions for Christmas decorations, program outlines, all of which could be used in the home. Other

churches have sent to their families copies of the folder *Christmas Joy*.² This contains a simple program for a service in the home at Christmas with Scripture, carols, prayers and a Christmas tree dedication which could be used by members of the family. Such help to homes has seemed equally appropriate and practical to many churches as to conduct a program in the church where individual members of families will have little opportunity to take part.

• • •

ONE OF THE CHURCHES in Indianapolis carries on a program for its students now attending college. The church has a student secretary whose duty it is to keep a record of the students and to keep in touch with them by cards and letters. The student secretary in this church is a teacher in the Sunday school and had in her classes many of these young people who are now students in college or university. Once a year, when most of the students are at home, a breakfast is served at the church for them. This breakfast is held on a Sunday morning from 8:45 to 9:30, with an emphasis on fellowship. No speeches are made, but remarks of greeting and cheer are brought by the student secretary of the church. Contacts made by the secretary during the year consist mainly by the sending of cards before and after the breakfast, and through correspondence at Christmas and Easter. Such a plan as the above might be a part of the church's activities at the Christmas season, leading to a student recognition Sunday following Christmas.

²Sales Literature Section, The United Christian Missionary Society, 222 S. Downey Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana. 2¢ each.

Family Counselors

Question: We want to make our children very much aware of the religious significance of Christmas. Will you suggest ways in which we can do this?

Answer: Rather than suggest specific ways for keeping Christmas in a Christian way may, I give you a few sources where you can find countless suggestions? *Christmas in the Home* is published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis 3, Missouri, and costs fifty cents. It contains stories, poems, carols, and pictures for use with children, as well as suggestions for decorations, family worship, gifts, and games. *The Family Celebrates Christmas* is published by the Pilgrim Press, and costs fifty cents too. In addition to similar suggestions, it contains outline figures to color and cut out for a Christmas diorama. Both of these booklets are excellent source material, and will give you guidance and incentive to develop in your own family group your own Christmas traditions.¹ E. N. J.

Question: Should we tell our children there is no Santa Claus?

Answer: There is quite a difference of opinion on this matter. Many parents feel strongly that a child should experience the joy which belief in Santa Claus brings. Others feel just as strongly that the Santa Claus conception, if accepted as a reality, puts too much emphasis on the material side of Christmas and not enough on the spiritual—upon the “getting” idea rather than the “sharing” ideal. The writer holds the latter view. Here is what one family did.

After frankly discussing with its pre-school children that not all people taught their children in the same way and that they must respect the feeling of other children who believed that Santa Claus is a person, the mother explained that



Dorothy
Faust



Leslie R.
Smith



Elizabeth
N. Jones



Paul B.
Baum

Santa Claus is not a person but rather a spirit—the spirit of giving. But this was rather difficult for a pre-school child to grasp. So for the Christmas celebration, a Santa Claus mask was purchased. Then each member of the family in turn donned the mask and played Santa Claus as he presented his gifts to the other members of the family. The children caught the idea and benefited by the Santa Claus spirit in their own hearts. They never went through the disillusioning experience of finding out that there was no real Santa Claus. L. R. S.

Question: How can we emphasize the Christian aspect with small children?

Answer: Here is what one family has done for years. Dime store figures of the characters of the nativity were purchased along with a small wooden stable. Some days before Christmas, when the tree is decorated, an attractive creche is made of the nativity scene. Then on Christmas eve, all gather around this creche while they sing some of the best-loved Christmas carols. After this, each child is given one or more of the figures and as the father reads the Christmas story from St. Luke, each child places his figure back in its place in the nativity scene as that character is mentioned in the reading. All take part in prayer at the close of this little service.

Also encourage your children to save enough of their Christmas spending money to purchase a gift for a poor child and also to share in the church school offering with a definite appreciation of the places to which such an offering goes. L. R. S.

Question: In my business, I sometimes find it difficult to deal with non-Christians in a Christlike manner. Is this necessary if I am to be true to my religion?

Answer: Jesus' teaching is very clear on this point. He said, “Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” He also pointed out that we are to “love our enemies, bless them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you.” This leaves no alternative even to the business man. The temptation is to think that one is the loser, but Christianity becomes effective only when Christians begin to practice Christian principles as a basis for their actions. Of course, it isn't easy. Christ, himself, did not seek the easy way, nor did he say it would be easy for us to follow him. P. B. B.

Question: Do tell me if it is advisable for my sister and I to go to a public dance to meet some nice boys? Will the boys think we are decent girls if they find out that we are alone?

Answer: I know many girls do go

¹See also the article in this magazine by Vera Channels, “Start Your Christmas Traditions Now.”

to public dances to meet boys. I can advise them but I cannot keep them away. However, I do know the outcome in many instances.

Many, many are the tear-stained faces of ashamed and broken-hearted girls who tell me their stories between sobs and who come seeking information as to how they can get in a home for unmarried mothers or get away from their families. Their boy-friends are no longer interested in them. Their boy-friends were picked up at a public dance.

If you go to a dance alone, you have no right to feel insulted by anything that is said to you. Sure, you will meet a boy-friend—but what kind? No girl should go to a dance without a proper escort.

There are many ways for you and your sister to meet fine young men. Churches have excellent young people's activities and new people are always most welcome. I can think of no better way of meeting that nice young man.

D. F.

Question: What are some of the considerations which a boy or girl graduating from high school should take into account in selecting a college?

Answer: One must assume that the person asking this question is facing the choice of a Christian versus a secular college. If the educational reputation of the college in the field in which the major study is to be done is satisfactory, and if there are opportunities for personal growth in social, emotional, and physical areas, and if finances are not a serious problem, then the selection of a college where Christian principles are practiced by the administration, faculty, and students becomes more significant. Many conflicts between science and religion can be avoided if the approach to truth is made by instructors who are thoroughly Christian. P. B. B.

Question: We have been married ten months and we are beginning to get on each other's nerves. What is the trouble?

Answer: Well, of course, there are any number of things which might

be causing this edginess. However, it may be that you have been too constantly together. That is possible, you know. So strong and vital is the physical urge to be together that many young couples overdo their attentions. Temperance in this line cannot be too strongly counselled.

Each should be absent from the other during a part of every day. Friends often awaken many good qualities which the mate fails to arouse. This is no insult to love or to the mate. It is a commonsense fact and ought to be accepted. It does not justify jealousy. Outside interest, such as book clubs, luncheon clubs, church work, or community endeavor, will enrich your hours together as each contributes something new to the conversation, even as he did in the days before marriage. One of the strong ties during courtship is that you are not together all the while.

Now that you are together more, you may run short of anything to talk about. Better enlarge your individual experiences so that you may avoid those deadly silences when minds are dull and conversation just won't come—unless underlying such moments of silence there is the sense of mutual understanding and silent love.

Perhaps you have eaten every meal together, gone every place together, been together almost every moment since your marriage. You may need a vacation from each other. Let the wife go home to her parents for a two weeks' visit. Often nagging, whining, crying, or grumbling is just a perverted use of one's mate as a relief from boredom.

Two people appeared to be deliriously in love during the first year of married life, but their second year proved very stormy, and finally in their third year they were on the verge of separation. But they were intelligent young people and so decided to spend three weeks apart each year, except for corresponding. Eighteen years later an intimate friend paid them this lovely compliment: "Their marriage is like a house through which a spring wind is always blowing." L. R. S.

Question: Christmas is coming up and I don't know what I can get my wife. She has everything. Her folk just shower her with lovely gifts all the time. I can't meet the competition. What shall I do?

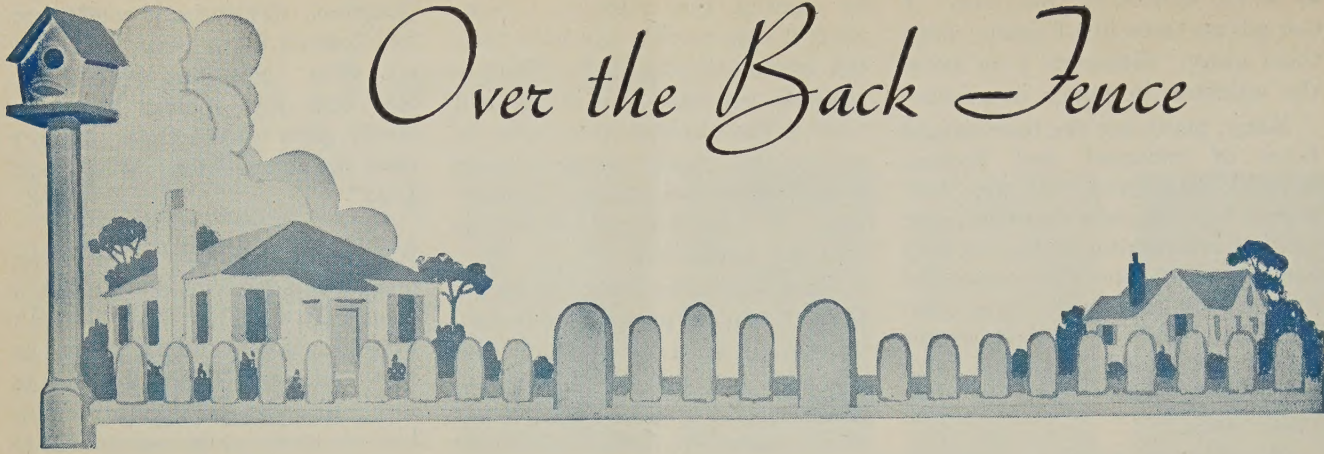
Answer: I know how you feel, but don't let it get you down. It's a good sign when one feels he can't give his wife as lovely a present as he would like. He who is really in love will never be able to give his love as much as he wants. That very sense of inadequacy may appear whether parents indulge the daughter or not. But don't worry, it indicates a solid foundation of love.

Why don't you talk the matter over frankly with your wife? Don't "blow up" over the lovely things her parents give her. Be as complimentary of them as she is. Tell her you wish you could afford something better but that there can be no gift with more love than yours carries. If she is understanding, and I imagine she is, your gift will mean more to her than any other regardless of its cost.

Also, every woman has some pet like or pressing need. It may be lipstick of a particular shade. It may be Madeira handkerchiefs. Perhaps she has been wishing for more pillow cases or wash cloths. The fact that you have noted her whim or need will boost the value of the gift many times.

Things that have to do with idealism, love, religion may not be very expensive, but are just too personal for anyone else to give. Perhaps she has wanted a picture of the head of Christ. Buy her one. Have a regular unveiling when you present it. And for a few nights, before retiring, hold her in your arms before the portrait and tell her you long for your love for her to be as unselfish and undying as His love is for all.

My friend, be creative and genuine in the gift. Then you won't have any worries about the size or cost. P. B. B.



Over the Back Fence

Is There Still No Room?

As this is being written a sweltering Congress in scorching Washington has done nothing to liberalize the provisions of the conditions to allow displaced persons admission to our country.

There may be reasons, even some good ones, why we are so reluctant to receive our proportionate share of these twentieth century "*les miserables*." Perhaps the inn keeper had his "good" reasons for not finding a place for those "displaced persons" from Galilee. But it is a little difficult for a Christian conscience to discover what those reasons are.

There are those who *are* "making room." Many churches, and many individuals within the churches are making the necessary arrangements, providing the required guarantees, and furnishing the essential money through Church World Service for bringing families out of the old world of sorrow into the new world of hope and promise. Such persons are "saving the face" of the United States; are keeping the following from becoming a hollow mockery:

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.* (Taken from the tablet at the base of the Statue of Liberty.)

What can your home and your church do about this?

Start the Tide Rolling the Other Way!

You remember the boy who saved his city from the threat of a broken dike by keeping the first small leak from becoming larger? Sometimes we bemoan the fact that we are about to be engulfed by the flood of commercialism, secularism, unchristian spirit, selfishness, licentiousness and all the rest of the category of bad things during the Christmas season. Too often we think the only way to stop it is the little Dutch boy's "hand-over-the-little-hole" method.

If one person can stop a leaky dike, perhaps one person can start the tide rolling the other direction. In other words one person by his own positive actions can swell the tide of the real Christmas spirit when he joins with others of like mind. He can be thoughtful of others when he goes shopping, especially those who wait upon him in the stores. He can remember the poor postman who goes his weary rounds loaded down with much unnecessary mail, needlessly late. He can be more personal in his gift-giving, by thinking and preparing long in advance for this annual observance. He can take time to think upon the real meaning of Christmas and what he can do to enlarge the boundaries of peace and good will toward men.

It is well to remember that the mighty river that sweeps all before it receives its ultimate power from the countless little springs and streams back in the highlands.

Christmas Belongs to the Home

More than any other of our annual celebrations, Christmas is properly a home festival. It centers around the most significant event in the life of the home—the birth of a Child. Its main characters make up that basic unit to all human society—the family. Through all the centuries since the advent of the Light of the World the most intimate and treasured associations honoring the event are gathered within the home.

The home will have to hold this priority against

attempted encroachment from many sides. There are subtle, perhaps unrealized, tendencies to try to take Christmas out of and away from the home. Commercialized amusement forces, the school system, and even the church contend for time during this season of the year. Although this competition may not be bad in itself, if it results in the home being left with no time to build and renew its own life and traditions, the home and eventually the true spirit of Christmas will suffer.

Parents, it is up to you to see that Christmas in your home is kept for its highest and best purposes.



Gifts

with a definite purpose
everyone will appreciate

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ideal for lasting value
helpful in daily living

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by Hampton Adams

In answer to a great need: an appeal for more capable young men to become ministers; for parents to understand the need; for the church to seek out young men and exalt the office. \$1.50.

A Manual of Forms for Ministers

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Appropriate Scripture selections and order of services for all church activities—the baptismal service, marriage ceremonies, ordination of elders and deacons, installations, conducting meetings, worship services, funeral services, etc. \$2.00.

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God Lives in Homes

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A pocket handbook for ministers and elders to revitalize and enrich the communion service. Scripture texts, original meditations and prayers for the Loaf and for the Cup, and hymns for 54 services. \$1.00.

CHRISTIAN
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PUBLICATION
St. Louis 3, Missouri

Grow Together Instead of Apart



—Religious News Service.

Today family life is becoming more and more a "hello and good-bye" affair with a few gulps of food thrown in. Children often feel they have little in common with parents who are so busy with their own friends and activities. Why not make a good resolution for the new year ahead? Set aside a few minutes each day for family devotions and use the new brotherhood devotional quarterly, *THE SECRET PLACE*. Let all the family participate. *Grow together instead of apart!*



Each quarterly issue of *THE SECRET PLACE* has 96 pages. There is a suggested Scripture reading for the day, a key verse, a brief meditation and a short prayer.

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